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IEKF Seminar on Kashmiri Pandits at The House of Commons London



Heartiest Greetings From AIKS on Auspicious Dussehra & Deepavali Festivals

Photo Coverage of the IEKF Seminar at London September 11, 2013













AIKS naad VOL. XXIII NO.10 OCTOBER 2013 / Asvin 2070 / 5089 (Saptarishi)

INSIDE

THIS MONTH'S COVER

Features a group photograph of the important seminar on KP issues at House of Commons, London.

[Photo courtesy: Dr. Krishna Bhan)

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Editorial

TRIUMPH OF THE PEOPLE'S WILL BUT AT WHOSE COST?



The Central Government's recent decision to withdraw the most controversial ordinance and the related bill that sought to amend the Representation of the People Act and would have offered protection and reprieve to convicted MPs and MLAs, in contravention of the Supreme Court verdict, has been rightly hailed as a resounding victory of the people of India, deeply frustrated with the criminal misdeeds of our politicians. BJP and the Left parties had expressed their strong reservations on the bill when it was taken up in Parliament at the fag end of the autumn session, and that is why it was eventually referred to the standing committee. BJP leaders later called on the President of India and beseeched him not to sign the ordinance, as it would send wrong signals across the political spectrum.

Following the Congress Vice President Rahul Gandhi's impromptu appearance few days later at a Press Meet convened by Congress's Media manager Ajay Maken and his sudden outburst that the decision of the government on the ordinance was "utter nonsense" and should be "torn and thrown away", bewildered everyone and led to a serious political crisis. However, the euphoria generated by this unexpected outburst, particularly at a time when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was away in the US for the UN General Assembly session and was about to meet with President Obama, was surprising. Most of the senior Congress leaders, including many Union Ministers, were carried away by the Gandhi scion's observation and hailed it as a "game-changer" and rallied behind him, disregarding the fact that the manner in which he had thrown a challenge to the Prime Minister and his Council of Ministers was contrary to the established constitutional practices. It was conveniently forgotten that only on September 24, the same Cabinet, fully backed by the Congress high command, which includes its President and the Vice President, had approved the ordinance aimed at negating the Supreme Court order of July 10 which had ruled that any lawmaker would stand immediately disqualified if convicted by a court. The underlying anxiety of the ruling dispensation then was undoubtedly to save the political future of RJD chieftain Lalu Prasad Yadav, the consistent supporter of the Congress-led govt. and the loyal Congress MP Rasheed Masood, whose corruption cases were coming up for final disposal in CBI courts on September 30.

On return to India, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh who seemed visibly annoyed and upset at the affront and disregard of his authority, told the media that he would meet Rahul Gandhi and find out why he had to resort to the manner he did while commenting on the ordinance and sort it out with him. Eventually, at the end of the day, after a series of meetings with Rahul Gandhi, President of India, Congress core group and allies, the "all-powerful" Congress Vice President's *fait accompli* prevailed over the collective will of the Prime Minister, the Union Cabinet and the UPA allies, forcing the Government and the riled and angry UPA allies, to dump into the dustbin of history the infamous ordinance which they had just adopted, and sent to the President for signature. It came to be known later that the President himself was disinclined to give his approval.

This is perhaps one of the rarest cases when the Union government led by the Prime Minister, was forced by an individual Party functionary, not holding any office in the government, to backtrack and rescind a measure which had earlier received full backing both from the ruling party and the Cabinet. This has led to a serious erosion in the authority of the already beleaguered Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh whom someone has rightly described as an "over-rated economist" and an "under-rated politician". While Rahul Gandhi has lately conceded that he should not have used the words that he did, and Sonia Gandhi also told him about it, it is too little and too late for the damage has already been done.

All said and done, the immediate and heart-warming fall-out of the latest Cabinet decision is that Lalu Yadav has been convicted and sentenced in the infamous fodder scam case to a jail term of five years, with a hefty fine and Rasheed Masood convicted in the AIIMS admissions scam case with 4-year imprisonment. Both have lost their parliamentary seats and the right to contest elections for the next eleven years. Corruption law should now catch up with other corrupt politicians who consider themselves above the law. If this law had been enacted earlier, many of the politicians with serious criminal charges would have been rotting in jails.

All is well that ends well. Upholding of the apex court's verdict to disqualify the convicted lawmakers, has been hailed by millions across the country and will indeed be a watershed in the annals of our democratic system. It needs to be protected for all times to come. We do hope that no attempt shall ever be made by anyone to dilute the Supreme Court judgement by any means hereafter. Political parties must also ensure that in the ensuing State and Parliamentary elections, no tickets are given to candidates with criminal records.

– A. N. Kaul Sahib

From the President's Desk

SOME POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS

Moti Kaul



Month of September remained quite hectic for AIKS and various other KP Organizations. The important events that unfolded during the month, were productive and to some extent satisfying. I am referring to the Meeting with the Home Secretary, IEKF seminar at The House of Commons, London and Supreme Court Hearing. It was heartening to note that representatives from different KP organizations presented both short and long term concerns of the community effectively and constructively. Collectively, we reinforced our willingness to move forward as long as our short and long term issues are addressed to our satisfaction. We need to demonstrate the same collective spirit in future, so as to bring some meaningful results. As far as IEKF seminar is concerned, I wish to compliment Mrs. Krishna Bhan and her team for the excellent arrangements and managing to bring important MPs of United Kingdom on board. We are so very grateful to Mr. Marcus Jones and other MP's of UK for having conveyed their unequivocal support to our struggle in exile. Let me quote few specific lines from the speech of Mr. Marcus "I am indeed pained with your plight and the struggle that you have endured for the last two decades. Your dignified and structured return shall be the litmus test both for the local administration and all the stakeholders."

The Civil Writ Petition filed by AIKS with the Supreme Court came up for hearing on September 20th. The honourable court once again reprimanded the State Govt. for their neglect and casualness in responding to the unprecedented exodus of Pandits and their continued displacement since more than two decades. They further instructed the State Govt. to respond within six weeks the status of sales and purchases of properties belonging to Pandits under the J&K Distress Sales Act and a comprehensive Action Taken Report with regard to the other long list of pending issues. Friends, this has been a healthy development and we shall continue to pursue this petition to its logical conclusion. While talking about the positives, it is heartening to note that our brethren including many of our leaders are reconnecting with our folks, and our Temples & Shrines in the valley. You may be glad to note that many of our Temples which were damaged and in total devastated conditions have been rebuilt by our own people. I am personally glad with these developments since AIKS took a conscious decision about four years back to connect ourselves with our members who chose to stay back under very difficult conditions in the valley and also retrieve our living symbols in the form of Temples and Shrines.

Having talked about the positives, let me share some sort of despondency and anxiety expressed informally by many of our fellow brethren. They are deeply concerned with the manner in which some members are responding aggressively to the contrary point of views on various important subjects. We do tend to go overboard in our expressions and language. At the end of it, a well intentioned discourse gets derailed and in our enthusiasm we unwittingly give ammunition to our real enemies. There was a time when we had a large contingent of soldiers on the ground Zero supported by even larger contingent from outside. Today, this figure of hardcore committed activists has dwindled to a large extent. This was expected, especially because of dispersal and basic survival at alien places. While I am not as much concerned with today's low numbers, I am deeply worried about the large constituency, who are shying away from healthy discourse and involvement, primarily because of aggressive and labelling culture developed by some netizen friends.

With four decades of my community connect, I am convinced that we are an Intelligent and Well-meaning people with noble intentions. We may differ in our approach but we always mean well for our folks. Our different Organizations, Forums and active players connected with social, religious and political activity have been playing a monumental role in the survival of our community in exile. Labelling therefore own folks with names, does not fit our 5000 years of great history. We need to appreciate that such aggressive expressions are making our position vulnerable, even among friends and well-wishers from other sections of Indian society. May I, therefore, humbly request and urge upon you all to kindly refrain from pulling down each other, more so on public forums. With limited resources at our disposal, let us focus and dedicate our energies on the respective agendas that we are pursuing. ◘

GENERAL SECRETARY'S COLUMN

Dr. Romesh Raina



Kashmir's journey to peace is still hazy and has lot of imperfections. The state is living with the fallout of the everyday happenings, in the form of mayhem, killings and terrorizing people. It is playing an important role in moulding the thought process of the people. The demise of Kashmir as a centre of tolerance and liberalism is therefore a natural corollary.

The grammer of Kashmir politics has undergone a change though slowly but significantly. Illustrative of it are the recent terror incidents like Kishtwar and Hiranagar which have grabbed the centre stage of nation's attention primarily for two reasons-one terrorism is not over yet and another that it is coming out of Kashmir valley to engulf the entire state of J&K. It has brought renewed attention to the whole issue once again. The intensification of terror attacks in J&K has put into question the role of Pakistan Army once again. This is because of the presumption that Pakistan's Kashmir policy is controlled by the Army which is yet to shed its hostility towards India. Barbaric decapitation of Indian soldiers by Pak Army is a recent example of its policy towards India. It has always resorted to psychological warfare in a localized strike to demonstrate its reluctance to shed its Kashmir obsession. They are consistent in their pursuit of the long term strategy directed against India, that of keeping the so called Kashmir issue alive.

The moral lesson to be learnt from it is that India enters into more assertive phase. As such it assumes significance to express the country's resolve to fight the terrorism and re-assert faith in the unanimous Parliamentary resolution on Kashmir remains symbolic of the will of the nation. The fact remains that India Pak relations remain hostage to Pakistan Army's policies towards India and anti-India sentiment remains a common factor there. Therefore Pakistan peace overtures at the best remain a public relation exercise.

AIKS activities of the month include:

1. Meeting with Shri R. K. Srivastava IAS, Joint Secretary Kashmir Affairs on 5th Sept., 2013 – An AIKS delegation comprising of Shri M. L. Malla, Vice President, myself and Dr. Kuldeep Dhar (Gen. Secretary, Migrant Employees Forum) called on Shri R. K. Srivastava to discuss the issues of concern to the displaced KP community and also to urge the J&K Govt. to cancel the transfer orders of the migrant doctors and paramedics. The major issues that were discussed are reproduced as under:

A. **Uniform Relief Policy** – The policy adopted by the J&K Govt. towards the relief being disbursed to Kashmiri Migrants has a provision for the addition of a member of the family in case of death of any recipient of relief, besides a host of other provisions but Delhi Govt. has no provision for addition of a member in case of death of a member. It is suggested that the J&K relief policy may be adopted in Delhi also by taking up the issue with the appropriate authorities. **(Partly agreed for the inclusion of a member in case of a death of a member.)**

B. **J&K Relief Office at Delhi** – To deal with the day-to-day problems of Kashmiri Migrants staying in Delhi and NCR, it becomes necessary to open a Relief Office of the J&K Relief Commissioner in Delhi. This would help in mitigating the problems related to State subject, Relief matters, Teh-Bazari matters of Delhi. It would also act as an agency of Govt. of J&K to deal with the issues of Kashmiri Migrants living in Delhi with Delhi Govt. and other concerned agencies. **(Partly agreed in the Apex committee meeting held recently in Srinagar by having the Relief Commissioner (M) to visit Kashmir House twice a month for the purpose.)**

C. **Increased security measures for KPs in the Valley:** In spite of the tall claims made by the Central and State Governments that normalcy is fast returning to the State of J&K, Kashmiri Pandits staying in the Valley continue to be terrorized. Unconfirmed reports from Kashmir say that on the intervening night of 31st August and 1st September, some unidentified miscreants fired at the security picket posted at village Pargooch in District Shopian which is about 15 to 16 kms. from village Hall. It has about 10 to 12 Kashmiri Pandit families staying there. Such incidents do have a demoralizing effect on KPs and a sense of confidence needs urgently to be

instilled in them.

Some other issues brought to the notice of Mr Srivastava :-

a) **Transfer of Kashmiri Migrant Doctors/ Paramedics:** About a year back the Kashmiri migrant doctors/paramedics drawing salary from the office of Resident Commissioner New Delhi and likewise in Jammu where asked to report to Jammu for posting. The issue was taken up with the State Govt. for cancellation of the order on the following grounds:-

i) Most of the doctors where retiring within a span of one year and the rest within a period of three years and their dislocation at this point meant another migration for them.

ii) Since it was the middle of the session, the education of their children would get adversely affected and the re-location of the kids to the new schools/colleges would cause immense problems.

iii) Forcing to join at this stage would mean leaving behind their old sick parents who need continuous and constant supervision and as such could not be left alone.

Taking cognizance of the above arguments, Govt. of J&K agreed to extend the joining period by six months. After the expiry of six months, the issue was once again raised with J&K Govt., who extended the joining period by another 3 months (till 31st July 2013).

In view of the above facts, Govt. of J&K may be urged to cancel the notice as such extensions in the joining period have only resulted in increased uncertainty. **(As a response J&K Govt. shelved the transfers orders in the Apex Committee meeting held recently in Srinagar.)**

b) **Request for registration as Kashmiri Migrants in Gujarat:** AIKS has received a letter from Shri S. K. Bhan, Vice President, Koshur Sumchar, Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar (an affiliate of AIKS).

This is regarding the request for registration as Kashmiri migrants in Gujarat. It says that they have been living in Gujarat for the past 23 years after being forced to leave Kashmir Valley in the aftermath of the violence unleashed against them. Despite living there, Govt. of Gujarat has not registered them as Kashmiri migrants though they approached the Govt. several times.

Shri Srivastava assured the delegation that he would follow up the issues by taking there up with the appropriate authorities.

2. **In-House meeting with prominent Community leaders:** An in-House meeting with the community stalwarts was held in J. N. Kaul Memorial Room on 10th Sept., 2013 in connection with the hearing of CWP on 20th Sept., 2013 (filed by AIKS in Supreme Court). The participants included Sarvashri Vijay Aima, Pandit Gautam Kaul, Dr. Romesh Raina, M. L. Malla, Col. Tikoo, A. N. Kaul Sahib, Ajay Bharti, R. K. Bhan, Raj Kachroo, Hira Lal Wangnoo, I. K. Kilam, Arun Shalia, Prof. B. B. Dhar, Sunil Shakdher, Dr. L. N. Dhar, M. K. Kaw, R. K. Kaul, Ashok Bhan, Sanjay Ganjoo and many others. The meeting was presided over by Shri M. K. Kaw, Chairman AIKS Trust.

The members were requested to give their views and suggestions in the light of the changes that have taken place ever since the writ petition was filed in Supreme Court of India. All the members were provided the vital inputs useful for strengthening the case. The meeting ended on a positive note.

3. **Meeting with Kashmiri migrant Teachers (MCD) on 11th Sept., 2013** – The migrant teachers working in MCD called on AIKS on 11th Sept., 2013 to discuss the long pending issues of regularization and pay parity. The delegation included Mrs. Lalita Mattoo, Mrs. Lalita Peer, Mrs. Lalita Nehru, Mrs Neera Chagtu, Mrs Urmila Munshi, Mrs Usha Gurtoo and Mrs Archana Gurkha.

After listening patiently to their pleas, Dr. Romesh Raina suggested to them to form an appropriate strategy regarding their case and also promised them to take up the issue at the highest level. In the meanwhile, they were urged to remain connected with AIKS for their long term issues.

4. **Meeting with Shri T. K. Ganjoo and his team** – AIKS had a meeting with Advocate Shri T. K. Ganjoo and his team preparatory to the Supreme Court hearing of CWP on 20th Sept., 2013. The meeting was very productive and meaningful and the entire team expressed satisfaction at the way the case was being heard. They were of the view that they would present a factual position and would ask for the relief consistent with the magnitude of the problem.

5. **Preparatory meeting with all the KP invitees** – A preparatory meeting of all the KP representatives was convened on 19th Sept., 2013, on the eve of the meeting with the Union Home Secretary Shri Anil Goswami. Those who

participated included Sarvashri K. K. Khosa (President, KP Sabha Jammu), Dr. Romesh Raina (Gen. Secretary AIKS) H. N. Jattu (President AIKPC), H. L. Chatta (President ASKPC), M. K. Kaw (Chairman AIKS Trust), T. N. Razdan (President JKVM), Ajay Bharti (JKVM), Rakesh Kaul (President KSD), Vijay Raina (VP KSD), Ashwani Chrungoo (Panun Kashmir), Virender Raina (Panun Kashmir) and Sardar R. S. Raina.

The meeting was held to discuss and evolve a common strategy to present our case in one voice.

6. **Meeting With Home Secretary** – The meeting with the Home Secretary took place as scheduled on 19th Sept., 2013. The invitees included Dr. Romesh Raina (AIKS), Shri M. K. Kaw (Chairman, AIKS Trust), Shri K. K. Khosa (President, KP Sabha, Ambphalla), Shri T. N. Razdan, Shri Ajay Bharti (JKVM), Shri Rakesh Kaul, Vijay Raina (Kashmiri Samiti Delhi), Shri H. N. Jattu (AIKPC), Shri Ashwani Chrangoo, Virender Raina (Panun Kashmir), Shri H. L. Chatta (ASKPC) and Sardar Prem Singh Raina. (Please see related report elsewhere)

7. Hearing of CWP on 20th Sept., 2013 - Pleading the case before the Hon'ble Supreme Court, advocate T. K. Ganjoo and his equally worthy team including Mr. Rajiv Talwar, sought to know whether mandatory sanction under the J&K Distress Sales Act (1997) had been obtained from the State Government, with respect to the sale/purchase of the migrant properties after 1997. The Attorney, representing the J&K Government sought some more time for furnishing the full details about the issue. Another issue to which the attention of the Court was drawn was about the action taken report (ATR) from the Govt. regarding the concerns raised by the petitioner *i.e.* AIKS in its petition.

Acknowledging the AIKS contention, the Hon'ble Court has instructed the State Govt to file following reply within six weeks as under :-

a) File an affidavit to show the mandatory sanction for the sale and purchase of properties belonging to Kashmiri Migrants post-1997 under the J&K Distress Sales Act.

b) File an action taken report.

(Please see related report elsewhere)

ALL INDIA KASHMIRI SAMAJ (REGD.), NEW DELHI

MEETING WITH UNION HOME SECRETARY
KASHMIRI PANDITS MAKE THEIR POINT

Representatives from various Kashmiri Pandit Organisations were invited by Shri Anil Goswami, Home Secretary, Govt. of India, on 19th Sept., 2013 to discuss the status on various issues raised during the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs on Rehabilitation of J&K Migrants held on 30th July, 2013. The invitees included Dr. Romesh Raina (AIKS), Shri M. K. Kaw (Chairman, AIKS Trust), Shri K. K. Khosa (President, KP Sabha, Ambphalla), Shri T. N. Razdan, Shri Ajay Bharti (JKVM), Sarvashri Rakesh Kaul and Vijay Raina (Kashmiri Samiti Delhi), Shri H. N. Jattu (AIKPC), Sarvashri Ashwani Chrangoo and Virender Raina (Panun Kashmir), Shri H. L. Chatta (ASKPC) and Sardar Prem Singh Raina.

The meeting was held in response to the presentations made by all the Kashmiri Pandit organizations before Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs on 30th July, 2013. This meeting was chaired by Shri Anil Goswami, Home Secretary. Also present in the meeting were Shri R. K. Srivastava, Joint Secretary, Home (Kashmir Affairs), Shri P. P. Singh, Consultant K-III, Shri Vinod Kaul, Secretary, Revenue J&K Govt., Shri R. K. Pandita, Relief Commissioner, Govt. of J&K and officials from Govt. of NCT Delhi.

Dr. Romesh Raina and Shri M. K. Kaw from AIKS were called in first to present their viewpoints on the action taken report presented by the Govt. of J&K and Govt. of India. A response in the form of five points was made by the Govt. of J&K as under:-

1. CBM – J&K has already sent the Prime Minister's Package for amendments and revision.

2. Construction of Colonies – Deputy Commissioners of various districts have been instructed to locate the land within the respective districts for a district level cluster living.

3. Extension of Special Scholarship Scheme for Kashmiri Migrants – The Scheme has already been discussed with Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India and they have agreed for its extension to the wards of Kashmiri migrants studying in schools located outside J&K.

4. Temple and Shrine Bill –The bill is in the select committee presently which is taking different views. There are some differences in some sections of the society. However, these are being looked into seriously.

5. Employment – The delay in employment was because of court case. Now the process has been initiated and we will complete the next promised appointment of about 1500 persons in a time bound manner (March 2014)

While responding, Dr. Romesh Raina said that as far as the Prime Minister's package was concerned, it is only one component, that of employment, which is being followed and that too it took them almost 5 years for executing this component of PM's package. He wanted to know how long would it take for other components to see the light of the day. Regarding construction of cluster residences, he reminded the Home Minister that there was already a resolution adopted on 4th March, 2012 at AIKS Global Conclave in Jammu and that is a complete document regarding resettlement and CBM issues. He reminded the meeting that there was a lot of discussion on Temple and Shrine Bill only to make it difficult with each passing day. He urged the J&K Govt. and Govt. of India to understand that these Temples and Shrines constitute the living symbols of KP civilization in the valley of Kashmir and it needed a very sincere and honest effort to get it passed in the Legislature. It is a different matter that the same is not visible. The sum total of the presentation made by Dr. Romesh Raina was to force the Govt. to accept and take a step forward in the direction of ameliorating the issues of concern. Shri M. K. Kaw made a forceful presentation and his focus was on constitution of a Commission of Inquiry, Declaration of KPs exodus as a genocide, Change of their status as refugees, Declaration of KPs as a minority within the State, Investigation of murders that have taken place through CBI and Passage of Temples and Shrines Bill.

Shri K. K. Khosa, President KP Sabha Ambphalla, Jammu, in his presentation, highlighted certain other issues of importance *viz* prevalence of fear psychosis of exodus, need for

CBMs which include employment to be given in a time bound manner as promised by Chief Minister in the Apex Committee meeting held on 6th Sept., 2013 wherein he instructed the officers that remaining 1443 vacancies which were remaining out of the lot of 3000 persons who were to be employed, should be completed before April, 2014 when the next Apex Committee Meeting will be held. The second confidence building measure referred to by Mr. Khosa was regarding the Passage of Temples and Shrine Bill. The Chief Minister had assured the Apex Committee that the State Govt. will make all out efforts to ensure the passage of the bill by requesting the Congress President Mrs. Sonia Gandhi to direct Congress MLAs to support the bill in the forthcoming session of the J&K Assembly. Third point mentioned was the need to urgently remove the encroachments over private property so that the people who intended to make use of the PM's package are able to do so. Fourth confidence building measure proposed by Mr. Khosa was facilitation of interactive sessions with the civil society and frequent visits to the Valley of the younger generation in order to give them a firsthand feeling of the place of their ancestors. Fifth point mentioned was active involvement of the community in the political process by way of simplification and rationalization of the voting procedure both for the Vidhan Sabha and Lok Sabha elections. He also requested the meeting to recommend to all the major political parties of the state to give a few tickets for the Assembly election to KP representatives to send a signal that the Pandits are also a part of the overall Kashmir milieu.

Stressing on the above points, Mr. Khosa said that no further procrastination is warranted and even if we have already lost five years we should try to cover up some lost ground during the last year of the present State Govt. All efforts should be made to restore the pre 1989 situation in the valley when pluralistic society was prevailing. Mr. Khosa, while referring to the observation made by J&K Chief Minister in the Apex Committee meeting held on 6th Sept. that the approvals of various recommendations made by the State Govt. especially regarding the increase of 7.5 lakhs to 20 lakhs rupees which would be given for the construction of a house to those Pandits who wish to return to the Valley are still awaited. He requested the Home Secretary to ensure that all such approvals are accorded at the earliest so that the PM's package could be implemented to a greater extent.

– A Report from Dr. Romesh Raina

Cover Story

IEKF SEMINAR ON "ETHNIC CLEANSING OF KASHMIRI PANDITS AND THE WAY FORWARD"

"Pandits' Exodus an Unprecedented Human Tragedy", says Marcus Jones.



On 11th September 2013, Indo European Kashmir Forum (IEKF) organised a largely attended seminar in The House of Commons, London on the ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Pandits and the way forward. The meeting was chaired by Mr Marcus Jones, Member of Parliament, UK.

The keynote speakers at the seminar were: Marcus Jones, MP, Andrew Griffiths, MP; Krishna Bhan, President IEKF; Vijay Sazawal, International Co-ordinator of IAKF, ICKF and IEKF; Moti Kaul, President, All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS), Apex Body of Indian & Overseas KP Organizations; Raj Pandit, President of the UK Priest Association; Bharti Tailor, President of the Hindu Forum of Europe; Vivek Kaul, Member IEKF, Shantanu Bhagwat, Former Indian Diplomat; Gopalakrishna Rao, Representative of Kanchi Kamoti in Chennai; Surendra Sharma, Former President of Overseas Friends of BJP UK; and Chandan Kotwal, Executive Member IEKF.

Marcus Jones welcomed the speakers and the audience and said he appreciated the IEKF's initiative of organizing this Seminar highlighting the issues and concerns of displaced Kashmiri Pandits. **In his opening remarks, Marcus regretted for the inadequate response by the UK Parliament to the Kashmiri Pandits' unprecedented human tragedy. He presented a forceful and passionate assertion that for an ethnic minority, to remain in exile for over two decades, is shameful. It is the solemn responsibility of the Indian Government and the International community to effectively and decisively respond to the short and long term concerns of Kashmiri Pandits.** "I am indeed pained with your plight and the struggle that you have endured for the last two decades. Your dignified and structured return shall be the litmus test both for the local administration and all stakeholders", he added.

Krishna Bhan expressed her profound gratitude to Marcus Jones for supporting the initiatives of the displaced community and taking out his valuable time to be part of this humble attempt to showcase a historical persecution and the continued apathy towards the aborigines. She highlighted that Kashmiri Pandits' heritage, in the form of temples and shrines stand in ruins today. She further stated that the ethnic race stands on the verge of extinction and for that reason our honourable return to our place of birth is paramount. The manner in which the state apparatus has treated Pandits, is deplorable, she said. She complimented the effective role played by AIKS in responding to the challenges and the long term survival of the community.

Vijay Sazawal stated that exercising wishes of the majority by elections is necessary but not sufficient to claim democracy. Democracy also requires a binding commitment to pluralism, religious tolerance, protection of human rights of religious and ethnic minorities as well as women and children, and the rule of law. Democracy as exercised in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir has been reduced to Tyranny of the Majority

Dr. Sazawal stressed that the solution of the vexed Kashmir issue lies in shrinking, and not expanding, the choices for possible solution. Diversity of choices has neither brought political convergence or regional stability, nor reduced the misery and plight of the disfranchised in the State, including minorities. The single group who

have benefitted from the status quo are the empowered elites and their dependents.

He concluded by saying that the time has come for the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to close the Kashmir file by announcing its intention to declare the ceasefire line as the international boundary, and ask India and Pakistan to settle adjustments along the line of control through a dialogue.

Moti Kaul, President AIKS, in his keynote address, lambasted both the central and the state governments, for their utter failure in responding to our issues and concerns. While the exodus of Pandits in 1990 was an unprecedented human tragedy, last 23 years in exile have been traumatic, he said. The politico-bureaucratic nexus in our state of J&K has played havoc with our lives, ever since independence.

Mr Kaul explained in great detail how the Islamist Fundamentalists in collaboration with vested political class of the state were responsible in butchering more than 800 Pandits and their eventual forceful exodus. He also gave an exposé of the deplorable conditions of our only living symbols in the valley - the temples and shrines.

The recent communal violence at Kishtwar and Shopian have once again brought to focus the nefarious designs of the fundamentalists and the state administration to alter the demography of the state by forcing out the minorities from different locations. As a way forward, Mr. Kaul presented the resolutions passed in AIKS - organized global meet in Jammu on 4th March 2012. The main features of this resolution being – Satellite Township, Political Empowerment, Minority Status and passing of the Temples' bill.

Bharti Tailor gave a detailed account of the work that the European Council of Religious Leaders undertakes, including Youth networks and Women of Faith networks. Bharti offered to raise the profile of Kashmiri Hindus' tragic exodus, through the Hindu Forum of Europe.

Andrew Griffiths stated that Kashmir is not an issue about a line on the map; it is about people's lives, being driven away from home. He further said that when Allied troops move out of Afghanistan, the local insurgents will be looking for wars and it may spread into Kashmir. So it is important to have some resolution before Allied troops move out.

Shantanu Bhagwat, a former diplomat, gave a comprehensive presentation, on repealing of Article 370 which was temporary and in any case totally irrelevant today. State administrations with vested interests have to demolish the walls of hatred created by Article 370.

Other speakers also gave their forceful presentations denouncing religious fundamentalism in the J&K state that was instrumental in the ethnic cleansing of a peaceful community – Kashmiri Hindus. They emphasised on giving Pandits their legitimate rights – economic, political and religious.

While concluding the proceedings, Marcus Jones thanked the participants and assured his full support and cooperation to bring justice to the Kashmiri Hindus. He also promised to take up the issues and concerns of Pandits within the UK Parliament and other international bodies.

Chandan Kotwal presented the vote of thanks.

- A report by Krishna Bhan.
President IEKF

Observance of Martyrs' Day in UK

Indo-European Kashmir Forum and the UK KP Community observe 24th KP Martyrs' Day on 14th September, 2013. The IEKF Executive Members and the KP community gathered together in the Midlands to pay homage to the KP Martyrs. Dr. Vijay Sazawal, the International Co-ordinator of IAKF, ICKF and IEKF and Mr. Moti Kaul, President of the All India Kashmiri Samaj, Apex Body of Indian & Overseas Kashmiri Pandit Organizations, joined the gathering and paid rich tributes to the KP Martyrs and the Security Forces who laid down their lives to protect our community. Dr. Sazawal and Mr. Moti Kaul have been in the UK since 11th September to participate in the seminar in the House of Commons.

14 September reminds the Kashmiri Pandit community of the historical facts regarding its ethnic cleansing and genocide. The innocent Kashmiri men, women and children were brutally killed. An entire community was uprooted from its ancestral land and this community is struggling for its identity.

Addressing the gathering Mr. Moti Kaul said, 'Kashmiri Pandits face many serious challenges today for their survival'. Dr Vijay Sazawal stated, 'We, Kashmiri Pandits, started with a mass exodus and ended up with ethnic cleansing.'

The tributes to Martyrs culminated in one minute silence being observed by the gathering.

– Krishna Bhan President IEKF

TEXT OF THE ADDRESS DELIVERED BY SHRI MOTI KAUL AT THE IEKF SEMINAR ON "KASHMIR – ITS ABORIGINES AND THEIR ETHNIC CLEANSING".

Distinguished Panelists on the Dais, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I wish to congratulate The Indo-European Kashmir Forum for organising today's Seminar primarily focusing on the Ethnic Cleansing of Kashmiri Pandits and the overall Kashmir scenario. We are indeed privileged to have around us some of the distinguished Parliamentarians of the United Kingdom. On behalf of my community, I would like to profusely thank them all, for so eloquently dissecting the 65 - year old Kashmir imbroglio that has engulfed the entire Indian subcontinent.

Friends, 1990 was a watershed in the Jammu and Kashmir region of India when the entire ethnic race and the original inhabitants of Kashmir were *en masse* thrown out from the valley of Kashmir, by the local and foreign Islamist fundamentalists, fully supported and financed by Pakistan. 19th January, 1990 was that dreadful night when from every mosque of Kashmir, the loudspeakers reverberated with calls giving Kashmiri Pandits just 24 hours to leave Kashmir. An educated, peaceful, harmless community with non-violent moorings and a minuscule Minority – the Kashmiri Hindus - had no choice but to run for their lives and also save the dignity of their women folk. Until that day, more than 800 Hindus had already been mercilessly butchered by the local and foreign militants. This exodus, being the seventh large-scale forceful displacement of Hindus, having happened within an independent and strong India, is indeed shameful. It is an irony that Kashmir valley, which about 600 years back, was almost a cent percent Hindu kingdom is today a cent percent Muslim region.

The Hindus of Kashmir are an ancient people and inseparable part of the Indian civilization. Their social, cultural, religious and spiritual frame of mind are proto-Vedic. Descendants of Aryan origin, the Hindus lived in Kashmir from times immemorial. Lalleshwari, one of our greatest saints and poetess, represented the last resistance to the persecution and the ethnic extermination. The propagation of the sub-national diversity of India was a subtle design to undermine the Sanskrit foundations of this great nation - India. The creation of Pakistan was the first phase of that conspiracy. Neither Gandhi nor Nehru resisted this conspiracy. Recalling my childhood in Kashmir, there did appear some sort of camaraderie between all the communities. But, this was superficial, since what lay underneath was the hatred sown and propagated by the political and bureaucratic establishments of the State, ever since our independence.

While the exodus of 1990 was tragic, the period of last 23 years in exile has been traumatic. Friends, there are no parallels in the history, where an entire ethnic race – the aborigines – so mercilessly thrown out of their homes and hearths, continued to live as refugees in their own country for more than two decades in filthy camps at alien places. I must be candid in saying that Congress at the Centre in league with the National Conference in the State, which has virtually ruled inside for more than 50 years since independence, has played havoc with our lives. The only redeeming feature that saved our lives in exile was our pride in the Indian nation and inherent belief in Education. We sold all the assets, just to give education to our children. I wish to put on record the role played by the then Govt. of one of our big States - Maharashtra, by reserving seats for Displaced Kashmiri Hindus, in various technical colleges of the State. This State, at that time was run by Shiv Sena – BJP political parties. As against this, look at our own State of Jammu and Kashmir. Out of more than three hundred thousand youths recruited in the State during the last two decades, Kashmiri Hindus' share has been merely 400. Just to give you an idea of the continued apathy and discrimination against us, even in exile. The hegemony by the ruling class of Kashmir, have

Total J&K	Jammu Region	Kashmir Region	Ladakh Region
Area: 110,000 sq kms	26000 sq kms (23%)	15000 sq kms (16%)	59000 sq kms (61%)
Population	5.6 million	5 million	0.3 million
Parliament – Seats	02	03	01
State Assembly seats	37	46	04

all through created walls of hatred between the Communities and regions of the State. Let me share some statistics to corroborate this regional discrimination.

It may be pertinent to mention here that the recent communal violence in Kishtwar and Pulwama, was yet another attempt by the fundamentalist forces to create a panic situation so that the minority Hindus could flee from these areas also.

Temples and Shrines

While we continue to be in exile, the only living symbols of our heritage are our Temples and Shrines, spread across the nook and corner of Kashmir. Most of these religious places today are lying derelict and in utterly miserable condition. There is no record or inventory of these religious properties. We also understand that the government agencies and their cronies have grabbed large parts of lands attached to these temples. In fact, All India Kashmiri Samaj (AIKS), prepared a comprehensive blue-print that could safeguard these religious places for all times to come. Based on these documents finally, draft of a Legislative Bill was prepared and presented to the State Legislature. It is a pity that, yet again the nefarious designs of the ruling political class, are doing their best to stall the passage of this Bill.

Parliamentary Standing Committee

Let me now share an important information with the distinguished gathering. On 13th April 2007, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs constituted a sub-committee to go into in-depth examination of the Exodus and Rehabilitation of displaced persons. This sub-committee presented its Report No. 137 to the Parliament of India on 13th February, 2009. Let me quote few lines from this report:

"The Committee is moved by the pitiable conditions of the migrants. The unhygienic environment in which they live is extremely deplorable. The Committee expresses its serious concern about the criminal intent of vested interests to alter the demography in the State of J&K by not only forcibly ousting the minorities out of the State but also by changing the property rights in the revenue records so that the migrants are left with no stake to return back to the valley. The Committee demands that appropriate and effective action is taken to safeguard the right to properties of Kashmiri Hindus who have been compelled to flee their Homes and Hearths for fear of their lives and dignity."

Return and Rehabilitation of Kashmiri Hindus

It is an irony that even after 23 years in exile, our State Govt. has not even prepared a blue-print for our return. It may be of interest to the distinguished members here to note that on 4th March, 2012 last year, All India Kashmiri Samaj organised a Global Meet at Jammu which was attended by the representatives of most of the elected Kashmiri Pandits organisations from different parts of the country and overseas, to deliberate on the future course of action. Being convinced that both Central and State Govt. are not interested in our long term return and survival, we deliberated threadbare and brought out certain far reaching resolutions. I wish to share these briefly with you:

1- Constitute a Commission of Enquiry headed by a sitting Judge of the Supreme Court of India to probe into the circumstances and fix responsibility for ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus from Kashmir in early 1990.

2- The only justifiable option for our return is an "All inclusive Satellite Township" in Kashmir for the displaced members.

3- Since Political Empowerment is an instrument of protecting, promoting and survival of the identity of a minority community within the body polity, adequate reservations be made in the Assembly, the Parliament and local bodies.

4- To preserve the ethno-religious identity, Minority Status to the Displaced Hindus, should be granted.

5- Take urgent steps to protect and preserve Temples, Shrines, Worshipping Places and Pilgrimage Sites etc. The draft bill pending in the Legislative Assembly should be passed without any further delay.

While concluding, let me convey in unequivocal terms that Kashmir belongs to us as much as to any other community. We shall fight tooth and nail to reclaim our legitimate space in the valley, be it Economic, Political, Social and Religious. I wish to convey our gratitude to the Indian citizens, for their support and sensitivity shown towards the displaced community. We are of course concerned that the International Community's response to this unprecedented human tragedy was rather meek and casual. Ladies and Gentlemen, I on behalf of my exiled community would urge upon you all to play a proactive role and support us in reclaiming our Glorified Past and Legitimate Rights.

Thank you all for the patient hearing.

ALL INDIA KASHMIRI SAMAJ (REGD.)
(APEX BODY OF INDIAN & OVERSEAS KASHMIRI PANDIT ORGANISATIONS)

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CIRCULAR

Ref: AIKS/AGM-1-2013
Dated: 24.08.2013

To,

- All Affiliate units of AIKS/Patrons/Life Members
- All members of the Executive Committee
- Special Invitees

The Annual General Body Meeting (AGM) of AIKS will be held on 5th October, 2013 (Saturday) from 2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. at Conference Room, New Delhi YMCA, 2nd Floor, 1 - Jai Singh Road, (Entry Gate No. 2) New Delhi – 110001.

Agenda

1. Confirmation of the minutes of the last AGM held on 8th April 2012
2. Approval of the AIKS Accounts
3. Report on the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs meeting (30th July, 2013), Meeting with Home Secretary (28th July, 2013) and its follow up.
4. Progress on Shakti Nagar Project
5. Any other item with the permission of the chair

Tea : 5.10 p.m.

You are requested to attend the Annual General Body Meeting on the above mentioned date/ venue/and time. Please confirm your participation to the undersigned. Affiliate organizations are requested to nominate members from their units for attending the meeting and intimate us about their participation in advance. The activity report of the affiliate units and other suggestions should also be sent in advance.

Looking forward to your participation

Yours Faithfully

Dr. Romesh Raina
Gen. Secretary

THE NEWS FOLIO

Governor Vohra Inaugurates National Seminar on Contribution of Saints and Poets



A National Seminar was inaugurated by the Governor of J&K State, Shri N. N. Vohra at Jestha Devi Shrine Complex in Srinagar Kashmir on 7th September, 2013, in which nine eminent Hindi scholars and writers were felicitated and presented with cash awards. The subject of the Seminar was "Contribution of Saint Poets & Poetesses of India to the Social Equality, Religious Harmony and National Integrity". The Seminar was jointly organized by Hindi Kashmiri Sangam and Bhasha Sangam Allahabad. Fifty eminent litterateurs from all over India participated.

Contribution of Kashmir's Lal Ded, Nund Rishi, Bhakta poets like Krishna Joo Razdan and other sufi poets and the relevance of their message in modern times, was highlighted by the participants. The Governor *inter alia* emphasized the need for all required measures being taken for translating literary works of one language in various other languages for the benefit of the readers across the country, adding that this would also contribute towards the promotion of languages, enrichment of literature and national integration.

The Governor appreciated the services being rendered by the Hindi Kashmiri Sangam and Bhasha Sangam Allahabad in becoming a bridge between Hindi and Kashmiri and to preserve, promote and develop the age old culture of Kashmir. He released the current issue (fifth in the series) of *Kashmir Sandesh*, the only Kashmir - centric journal published by Hindi Kashmiri Sangam.

Besides the 5th issue of *Kashmir Sandesh*, translation of Hindi short stories into Malayalam by Dr. P. K. Chandran and collection of Hindi short stories *Sharnarthi* by Dr. Beena Budki, were also released on the occasion. The Chief Guest particularly Bhasha Sangam, Allahabad in bringing closer the writers of Indian languages.



Earlier, in his welcome address, Prof. Chaman Lal Sapru, President, Hindi Kashmiri Sangam, dwelt on the aims and objects of organizing this Seminar. He also gave details of the establishment, evolution, history and activities of the Hindi Kashmiri Sangam and Bhasha Sangam, Allahabad. Among those who also spoke on the occasion included Shri Govind Rajan, President of the Bhasha Sangam, Shri Shukla and Dr. Beena Budki, Secretary, Hindi Kashmiri Sangam. Shri Bharat Bhushan Bhat presented a Vote of Thanks.



A number of writers, intellectuals, functionaries of the Hindi Kashmiri Sangam, Bhasha Sangam Allahabad and participants of the Seminar from within the State and various other parts of the country were present at the inaugural function. Dr. Jia Lal Handoo, a nonagenarian scholar,

mado to Srinagar by air from Chandigarh' to attend the event and that was appreciated by all.

The following were honoured and given cash awards:-

1. Dr. Jia Lal Handoo (Chandigarh) **Sahitya Ratna Samman**

2. Smt. Khemlata Wakhlu (Srinagar) **Smt. Leelavati Sapru Sharada Samman**

3. Dr. Shashi Shekhar Toshkhani (Delhi) **Sahitya Shri Samman**

4. Shri Autar Krishan Razdan (Jammu) **Sahitya Ratna Samman**

5. Dr. Vidya Vindu Singh (Lucknow) **Sahitya Shri Samman**

6. Dr. S. Shesha Ratnam (Vishakhapatnam) **Sahitya Ratna Samman**

7. Dr. Mathura Datta Pandeya (Chandigarh) **Krishan Joo Razdan Samman**

8. Dr. Tribhuwan Shukla (Bhopal) **Sarswat Sahitya Manishi Samman**

9. Dr. Beena Budki (Ghaziabad) **Sahitya Shiromani Samman**

The following were honoured with awards in memory of eminent poets of Kashmir – **Lalded, Nund Reshi, Roopa Bhawani and Dina Nath Nadim** :-

Dr. P.K. Chandran (Kerala), Dr. P.K. Radhamani (Kerala), Dr. A. K. Preeta (Kerala), Dr. Meena (Kerala), Nirmala Patrikad, Duthi N.C., Sh. Akbar, Dr. R.C. Roy (Shantiniketan, W.B.), K.M. Varsha Roy (W.B.), Shivani (W.B.), Dr. Taniya (W.B.), Dr. Urmila Shukla (Chattisgarh), Dr. H.M. Kumaraswami (Karnataka), Dr. S.S. Satti (Arunachal), Dr. Sanjeeta Verma (Kathmandu), Dr. Rajendra Mehrotra (Gwalior), Dr. Mohini Kaul (Gurgaon), Dr. S.N. Sisodia (Sagar), Dr. Chandrawati Nageshwar (Chattisgarh), Gopal Mittal (Noida), Dr. Savitri Sapre (Durg, Chattisgarh), Sachi Sapre (Bilaspur), Jagdish Narayan Meena (Jaipur), Dr. Balwant Singh Yadav (Jaipur), Gajendra Charan (Jaipur), Dr. Bhagchandra Kumar (Jaipur), Dr Mahendra Beniwal (Jaipur), Dr. Anil Kumar Sahi (Mumbai), Dr. K.P. Sahi (Mumbai), Shashi Kumar (Ghaziabad), Mohini Padroo (Ghaziabad), Dr. Ruby Zutshi (Srinagar), Dr. Shabnam Shaukat (Kashmir), Sh. Prakash J. Zaheer (Mumbai), Dr Dilshad Jeelani (Kashmir), Vipin Saahi (Mumbai), Kumari Veena Gautam, Tehmeena Hussain, Sh Bharat Bhushan Bhatt (Srinagar).

Dr. M Govindrajan, President, Bhasha Sangam, Allahabad specially felicitated the following for their outstanding contribution to *Kashmiri and Hindi* Language & Literature :-

Prof. C.L. Sapru (President, Hindi Kashmiri Sangam), *Shri Satish Vimal (Writer-Broadcaster), Dr.* M.K. Bharat (Poet-Former Secretary, Hindi Kashmiri Sangam), Dr. Beena Budki (Editor Kashmir Sandesh).

– A report from Dr. Beena Budki,
Secretary, Hindi Kashmiri Sangam

Gen. G. D. Bakshi's Book "Kishtwar Cauldron" released

The book titled "Kishtwar Cauldron" by Gen. G. D. Bakshi was released on 13th Sept., 2013 at Vivekananda International Foundation, New Delhi by Gen. S. K. Sinha, former Governor J&K. The other panelists included Dr. Romesh Raina (Gen. Secretary AIKS) and Ms. Sandhya Jain (prominent journalist). The hall was packed to the capacity with the audience comprising of retired and serving Army officers, people from civil society and youth activists and other prominent citizens.



The programme started with the introduction made by the anchor regarding the author and the panelists sitting on the dias. She later invited the author Gen. G. D. Bakshi to speak about the book. Gen. G. D. Bakshi started with a power point presentation giving graphic details of the war against the terrorism in the State of J&K. Recalling some crucial moments during his tenure as Brigadier in Kishtwar, he described how he had thwarted some terrorist attacks there. It was history being narrated by the person who himself had contributed in making the history. He also said how Army had contributed in preventing the forced migration of the people staying in higher reaches and highlighted the role of the Army in bringing peace to the Valley. In his presentation, he thanked the people of the area who contributed in strengthening the Army by providing them with the valuable inputs

regarding the movements of terrorists, that helped in great deal in curbing the terrorist activities and also creating a terror free environment there.



Invited to speak about the ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley of Kashmir, Dr. Romesh Raina began his address by referring to the land to tillers policy introduced in the early 50s by the Govt. of J&K without any compensation to the landlords who where mostly non-Muslims and that was the beginning of neglect and discontentment of the minorities in the State. Even though the then Home Minister Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel, in a letter addressed to the State Govt., had urged for a compensation consistent with the policies of India, nothing happened. Its impact was visible later in the famous Parmeshwari agitation case when about 7-8 Kashmiri Pandits lost their lives for the cause returning the abducted woman to Hindus. Thereafter the political climate in the Valley started changing because of the influx of non-Kashmiri Muslims - barbers, preachers and mithaiwalas who spread throughout the length and breadth of Kashmir. They vitiated the whole atmosphere and as a consequence, 1986 Anantnag riots took place where temples, shrines, religious centers belonging to minority Kashmiri Hindus were burnt down. The political analysts called it a dress rehearsal which indeed it was as only in 1990s the entire Kashmiri Pandit community had forcibly to leave Kashmir. What followed thereafter is history. We continue to live as exiles in our own country. He concluded by saying that the reversal of situation in Kashmir is possible only if we restore the plural identity of Kashmir.

Ms. Sandhya Jain in her presentation urged for strong measures to combat terrorism as it was the biggest threat to the national security of the country. She focused on the combat of terrorism as a priority for us all.

Later, Gen. S. K. Sinha charmed the audience with his presentation which was full of facts, military experiences and role of army in the restoration of normalcy in the state of J&K. He said he devoted his tenure in J&K to the overall development of the State both in terms of social and other areas of development. Internal security was uppermost in his mind.

Vitasta Divas Celebrations

The three-day long celebrations of Vitasta Divas concluded on Sept. 16 at Viatasta shrine, Verinag, in South Kashmir district of Anantnag, the origin of river Vitasta.

The function was organized by Vitasta Devasthan Prabandhak Committee under the leadership of Pt. Moti Lal Kaul, a senior member of the Committee and its General Secretary R K Bhat.

Vitasta Divas was also observed this year at KSS, Chandigarh on September 13. The function was attended, among others, by the President of the Sabha Shri B L Dhar, and Sqn. Ldr. B. L. Sadhu. Young activist Smt. Sheetal Hakhoo had made arrangements for the function. There were other ladies and members of KS the Sabha present on this sacred occasion.

Shri Ashwani Kumar Chrungoo, PK President, was also present. Sqn. Ldr. Sadhu said he "felt thrilled to be a part of the programme. Our community has been observing this day for the last thousands of years in Kashmir. This time our effort at Chandigarh is a great beginning. I would request my community members to observe this day wherever they are to continue the glorious tradition of our history".



5th Annual Harmukh Ganga (Gangbal) Yatra 2013 concludes

With the return of holy Ganga Charri to Naraan Naag, the four-day long 5th Annual Yatra, 2013 of historic Harmukh Ganga (Gangbal), organized by The Harmukh Ganga (Gangbal) Trust (HGGT)



concluded on September 15. All Parties Migrants' Coordination Committee (APMCC), had started the Yatra in 2009 after 100 years at the mountainous North East Harmukh Range, 14500 ft above sea level. Yatris performed Ganga Ashtami Puja and Mahashraddha of the departed souls of the community on Ganga Ashtami and the culmination of Vedic Mahayagya.



The Yatra commenced under the leadership of Shri Vinod Pandit, Chairman APMCC and General Secretary HGGT on September 12 from Naraan Naag where Ganga *Charri Pujan* was performed at historic Naran Naag temple. After trekking 18km long hilly terrain, Holy Charri reached Gangbal where it was installed and Ganga Puja performed amid religious fervour.

King Bharati, Vice President of Harmukh Ganga Gangbal Trust (Regd) said this year the Trust organised the 5th annual yatra after proper registration and provided all facilities to pilgrims. He thanked the district administration, police force and the Indian Army for their support in the smooth conduct of the Yatra, particularly Capt Ujjwal Patial, of 24 RR (Bihar), of Wusan Kangan, for providing security support and other courtesies during the Yatra.

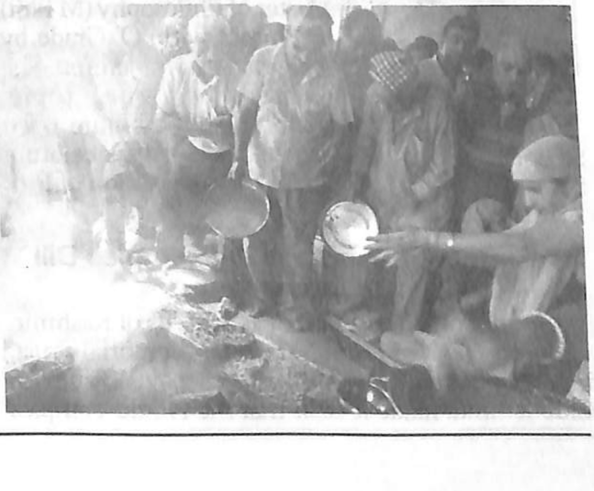


Prominent among the activists of HGGT and APMCC who participated in the Yatra this year included Ravinder Badam, Amit Raina, Sunil Kumar Trakroo, Vinay Koul, Chand Ji Bhat, Bansi Lal Bhat, Dr. Agnishekhar, Sushma Pandit, Ashok Singh Jamwal, Ashok Koul, Vinod Dhar, and officials of the security forces.



Sharda Ashtami Mahayagna

A Mahayagna on the day of auspicious Sharda Ashtami was performed with full religious fervour at Sharda Peeth Bantalab on Sept 13.09.13. A large number of devotees participated in the Havan to pay obesiance to Sharda Mata. After *poornahuti*, the devotees were served with *Prashad*. Prayers to Goddess Sharda, the deity of Kashmiri Brahmins,



sought peace and tranquility to be bestowed upon our community in particular and to the masses in general.

- R. L. Bhat
Chairman
Sharda Mata Trust

Sadhu Ganga Asthapan at Kupwara Burnt

Expressing resentment over the damage to Sadhu Ganga Asthapan in Kandi Khas, Kupwara, leaders of the Kashmiri Pandit Sangarsh Samiti (KPSS) said that the holy asthapan was burnt down to ashes during the intervening night of September 17/18, 2013. "Since its reconstruction by the State Tourism Department, the Asthapan was in controversy for changing the nomenclature of the Asthapan from a Pandit to Muslim name" these leaders said and added that "for the past six months, there have been many sporadic attacks of stone throwing and other incidents on the KPs".

KPSS reiterated and they did not want any lip sympathy from the leaders of the masses but concrete results on the ground zero where they have to ensure that such incidents never take place again.

Kashmir Minority Forum President, Advocate Satinder Singh also condemned the incident of burning down of the minority religious place at Kandi Khas and the harassment of minorities at different places in the valley, including Shopian. He appealed to the concerned quarters to probe these incidents to expose those who malign the image of a common Kashmiri.

Bindu Raina Qualifies for M.Phil



Bindu Raina, Daughter of Shri Bansi Lal Raina and Santosh Raina (R/o Police Lines, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu) has been declared qualified for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy (M Phil) in Physics with 'O' Grade by the University of Jammu. She worked on the topic, "Electrical Characterization of Neodymium oped Strontium Phosphate Grown by Room Temperature Solution Technique," under the supervision of Prof KK Bamzai.

Attempts to Sabotage the Temples Bill Opposed

Several organizations of the Hindus of Kashmir, under the aegis of Prem Nath Bhat Memorial Trust, in a press conference held on 17th Sept 2013 at Press Club Jammu, made it clear that the Hindu Temples and Shrines of Kashmir are not the private property or personal fiefdom of any trustee, member, management, *sadhu* or *purohit* to whom they have been entrusted. All Temples and Shrines there are the collective heritage of all Hindus of Kashmir, without distinction of caste, creed or surname. No discrimination on this count can be allowed. Hindus of Kashmir, without any discrimination, are collectively the legatees of all the Temple and Shrines of Kashmir, and are eligible to elect and be elected to the Shrine Board under the proposed bill.

Hindus of Kashmir stand for a democratic constitutional mechanism, as provided in the Kashmiri Hindu Temples and Shrines bill, pending before the State Legislature, and demand that the Temples and Shrines bill be passed *in toto*, without any exclusion. The community warns the vested interests against sabotaging this collective right of Hindus of Kashmir to all Temples and Shrines of Kashmir, in any way.

The press conference was addressed by Dr R L Bhat, spokesperson of the PNB Trust, along with Swami Kumarji of Gita Satsang Ashram, S/Sh H N Jattu of AIKPC, K K Khosa of KP Sabha, H L Chatta of ASKPC, H L Bhat of JKVM, Virinder Raina of Panun Kashmir, A K Raina of AIKS, M K Raina of Jawalalji Samiti, Prof P N Trichal of Samprati and Dr A N Pandita, Chairman PNB Trust.

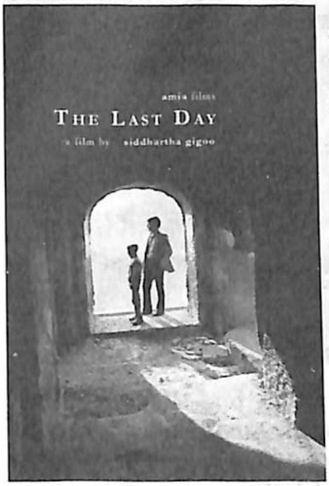
The joint press conference was a sequel to another press conference called by the leaders of J&K *Dharmarth* Trust (JKDT), Sanatan Dharam Sabha (SDS) and Sadhu Samaj representatives who openly opposed the proposed Bill and demanded that the draft legislation lying with Select Committee of the State Assembly be either reviewed or withdrawn. They said they would have no objection to the passage of the Bill provided the 45 temples of Kashmir managed by the DT and other Hindu organizations outside the J&K, are kept outside the purview of the Shrine Board to be formed after the passage of the Bill.

The JKDT President Brig (retd) G S Jamwal said that the passage of the Bill in its present form would result in controversy forcing the Hindu organizations to challenge the same in the court of law. He said all the 45 Hindu shrines in Kashmir which are managed by the organizations like DT and other trusts run by non-Kashmiri Hindus are safe and they have neither the threat of encroachments nor have these been damaged as their respective trusts maintained them properly during the period of the turmoil.

Brig Jamwal alleged that the Bill had been

introduced in 2009 and during the last five years the Government did not bother to seek the views of the organizations managing the Trusts in the Valley. He also made it clear that the Government has no authority to control the religious places of Hindus and alleged that the DT was also deceived by the Government while taking over the control of Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board. He added that after the formation of Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, we were assured that the DT will be paid the money for the management of the rest of the Shrines in State by the Board but the same was not considered after the formation of the Board and the said clause was deleted from the Bill.

Gigoo's Film The Last Day' Wins Accolades



The Last Day, a short film portraying the pain and suffering of displaced Kashmiri Pandits who had to flee their homeland after militancy erupted in Kashmir in the 1990s, has been selected for International Film Festival of Cinematic Arts, Los Angeles. Produced and directed by Siddhartha Gigoo, the celebrated author of the Garden of Solitude, 'The Last Day' has already won viewers' accolades and received three nominations in the forthcoming London International Film Festival to be held in October.

"The film depicts the plight of an entire community through the lives of four people living in the hope of a better tomorrow," says Gigoo.

"I've tried to bring to the fore the longing of a family for their homeland in an alien environment of migrant camps.

"Set in 1994 in a camp for Kashmiri Pandit in exile, the film portrays the life of an old patriarch, who is on his deathbed and battling dementia, and his family's daily fight for survival," says the filmmaker, whose family was also displaced from Kashmir.

The exiled community is still waiting for favourable political conditions in Kashmir for its return.

The film has received adulation at 6th International Documentary and Short Film Festival of Kerala (IDSFFK). It got nominated in 50 Best Films category during the Indian Independent Film Festival (TIIFF), Bangalore, in August.

The film was a major showcase during the 7th Annual Film Aid Film Festival, Kenya in Africa and Beskop Tshechu Documentary, Animation and Short Film festival, Bhutan.



– Deepak Raina
(deepakraina@yahoo.com)

Archna Koul honoured with Teacher of the Year 2012 Award

It is a matter of great pride for the Kashmiri Pandit community that Mrs Archna Koul, Principal, DAV Centenary Public School, Chander Nagar, Ghaziabad, has been honoured with the 'CBSE Teacher of the Year 2012' Award for meritorious contribution in the field of education. The Award was presented to her by Dr Mangapati Pallam Raju, Hon'ble Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Govt of India, in the gracious presence of Dr Shashi Tharoor and Shri Jatin Prasada, Hon'ble Ministers of State for HRD, Govt. of India, at a function held on 4th Sept 2013, the eve of the



Teachers Day, at India International Centre, New Delhi. The Award comprises a merit certificate, a shawl and a cash prize of Rs 25,000.00

Archna Koul is the wife of Shri Sanjay Koul and daughter of Smt. Vandana Mam and Late Major A. K. Mam. She is the daughter-in-law of Dr A K Koul, Patron, I P Extension Kashmiri Pandit Society, Delhi.

Heartiest congratulations to Archna Ji from the All India Kashmiri Samaj.

J&K Migrant Employees & Pensioners Welfare Association
Election of new office bearers

At a meeting of all the elected executive members of J & K Employees and Pensioners Welfare Association on 11.07.2013 in New Delhi, the following were elected as the new office bearers unanimously for the period 2013-15 :-

Mr. Roshan Lal Razdan – *President*; Dr. Umesh Moza – *Senior Vice President*; Dr. Kuldeep Dhar – *General Secretary*; Dr. U.K. Kakroo – *Treasurer*, Mr. Bhushan Lal Bhat – *Vice President*; Dr. Suman Jogi – *Secretary*; Mr. Ramesh Kitchloo – *Joint Secretary*; Mr. Ravi Kumar Koul – *Publicity Secretary*; Dr. A K Raina – *Executive Member & Chief Advisor*; Mr. Hira Lal Kher – *Executive Member*; Mr. Vipan Kumar Garyali - *Executive Member*; Mrs. Sunil Kumari Raina - *Executive Member*; Mr. Ashok Chogat - *Executive Member*; Mr. Ram Kishor Raina - *Executive Member*, Mr. Ravi Bhat (Sopori) - *Executive Member.*

Dr. Kuldeep Dhar
General Secretary

KP Society Bahadurgarh Janamashtami Celebrations



Kashmiri Pandit Society, Bahadurgarh celebrated *Zarama Satam*, the birthday of Bhagwan Shri Krishna on 27th August 2013 at Mata Kali Mandir, Kashmiri Colony with great zeal and fervour. The programme started at 8 pm and was attended by the entire Kashmiri community in Bahadurgarh, young and old.

Kashmiri *bhajans* were sung in the praise of Shri Krishna. A professional musical party then took over and enthralled everyone with soulful Krishna *bhajans*. Youth wing of the Society had made excellent arrangements for serving tea and *shakarpara* to devotees.

All the participants enjoyed the celebrations, which concluded around 12:45 a. m. with *Maha Aarti* and distribution of *Prasad*.

Bhagwan Sri Krishna appeared to have graced the event Himself as His presence was felt by all the devotees on at the occasion.



– Rakesh Sathoo
Gen. Secretary

National Conference on Bhoti Language at Leh

The speakers of Bhoti language are spread over five states, namely, Ladakh in Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. It is spoken by over 5.5 lac speakers. As an old rich language there is a demand for recognizing it as a language in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution of India. The Central Institute of Indian Languages, Govt of India organized a national conference on the subject at Leh on Sept 8-9, 2013. It was attended by about 50 scholars and linguists invited from different parts of India. Shri Ashok Thakur IAS, Secretary to Govt. of India, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of HRD inaugurated the conference. About 20 papers were presented in the conference.

Prof Omkar N Koul delivered the Valedictory

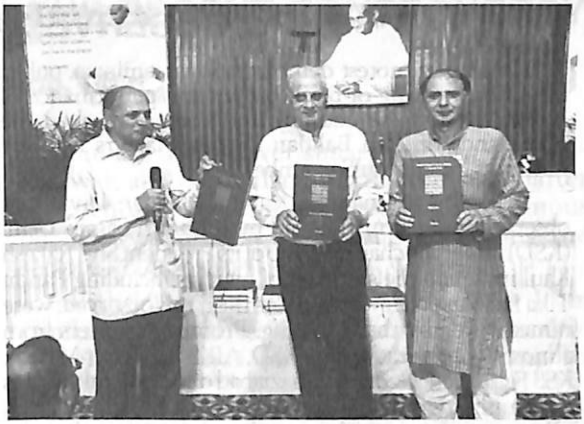
Address which was chaired by the Secretary to Govt of India. In his address, Prof Koul said that keeping in view its linguistic and spatial diversities, Bhoti is to be considered as a Bhoti Group of Languages. It has a very rich literature written in the Tibetan script and is a language of both cultural and linguistic identity of Buddhists in India. It can be included in the VIII Schedule and efforts are to be made to develop its modern registers and increase its use in education.



Photo of the conference participants

PLSI Honours Prof Omkar N Koul and Professor Roop Krishen Bhat

The Bhasha and Publication Centre (BPC) Vadodara has honoured scholars who have made significant contribution to the project of the People's Linguistic Survey of India initiated in 2010 and completed in 2013. Out of the fifty volumes dedicated to the nation on the 5th September 2013, four volumes are edited by Prof Koul and Prof Bhat as follows: *Languages of Jammu and Kashmir* (edited by Omkar N Koul), *Languages of Haryana* (co-edited by Roop Krishen Bhat and Omkar N Koul), *Languages of Punjab* (co-edited by Omkar N Koul and Roop Krishen Bhat), and *Languages of the VIII Schedule I* (edited by Omkar N Koul). Prof Koul and Prof Bhat were presented awards at a special function by the President, Sahitya Akademi. The volume on the Languages of Jammu and Kashmir includes description of two scheduled languages Dogri and Kashmiri, and thirteen non-scheduled and minor languages: Balti, Bhadarwahi, Brokskat, Burushaski, Gojri, Kishtawari, Kohistani, Ladakhi, Poguli, Punchi, Sheikh Gal, Shina and Siraji. It also provides the status of Hindi, Urdu, Sanskrit and Persian in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.



The Volumes edited by Prof Koul and Prof Bhat are dedicated to the Nation at Gandhi Smriti, New Delhi on the 5th September 2-13

Dr Indu Khoda Nominated as Member AIIMS Patna



Dr Indu Koul Khoda, Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, GMC Jammu, has been nominated as member of the Institute Body, the highest decision making body of All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Patna, which is one of the six new AIIMS established under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana.

Various members of this Institute Body include Union Minister for Health Ghulam Nabi Azad, Keshav Desiraju, Secretary in the Union Ministry of Health, Dr Jagdish Prasad, Director General of Health Services, GoI, Dr Girish Kumar Singh, Director of All India Instute of Medical Science Patna and others.

Dr Indu Khoda, wife of Chief Vigilance Commissioner, Mr Kuldeep Khoda, is a reputed Gynaecologist. She is also President of the Federation of Obstetrics and Gynaecological Society of India, Jammu and life member of Indian Medical Association of Gynaecological Oncologists of India.

Dr Khoda is also associated as Counsellor for Adolescent Friendly Reproductive and Sexual Health Services, PGD, MCH Indira Gandhi National Open University and Trainer RCH, AIDS and HIV Control (NACO & UNICEF).

KPs OBSERVE 24TH BALIDAN DIVAS

Holding of protest demonstrations, seminars, public meetings, wearing of black badges and performance of *hawans* across the country and abroad, marked the observance of 24th Balidan Diwas (Martyrs Day) by Kashmiri Pandits on September 14.

In Delhi, the national capital, Balidan Divas was observed at Kashmir Bhavan by Kashmiri Samiti Delhi (KSD) under the chairmanship of its President Shri Rakesh Kaul in which the sacrifices of martyrs including Pandit Tika Lal Taploo, in whose name the day is observed, were remembered by the gathering. Prominent leaders from almost all organizations *viz* KSD, AIKS JK Vichar Mauch, KSS Faridabad, Nodia, as Ghaziabad offered floral tributes to the photographs of the martyrs and also paid rich tributes to them on this occasion, observing that the community could never forget their sacrifices. The function was graced by Smt. Sarla Taploo and her family. Those who addressed the meeting included Savrashri Rakesh Kaul, Dr Romesh Raina, Col Tej Tiku, Moti Lal Malla, Dr L. N. Dhar, T. N. Razdan, A N Kaul Sahib and several others.

After the prolonged meeting at KSD, some of the participants moved over to Bal Krishan Ganjoo Memorial Park in Gole Market where JK Vichar Manch had arranged a solemn function where candles were lit at the well decorated memorial and collective *aarti* was offered. The gathering stood in silence for 2 – minutes in the memory of martyrs.

B.K. Ganjoo Memorial Park is now become known as Raj Ghat of Kashmiri Pandits. This park was named after the young and dynamic Kashmiri Pandit telecom engineer, Bal Krishan Ganjoo, who was working in BSNL and was incharge of Srinagar BSNL Exchange in 1990. This was a highly sensitive sector which was vital to keep the communication network alive despite many attempts made by militants to blow it up. This is the only place in the capital dedicated to martys of Kashmir Pandit community.Balidan Divas is an occasion to rededicate ourselves to the ideals and ethos for which the martyrs sacrificed their lives.



On 15th September 2013 also, Jammu and Kashmir Vichar Manch Team organised another meeting at the B.K. Ganjoo Park as part of their 4th Super Walkathon in which around 45 to 50 community members, mostly young boys and girls, were present. The participants paid homage at the Martyrs Memorial by offering flowers and lighting candles. Besides the usual walk, there was an impressive Marshal Art display by Master Pranav Dhar, son of Shri Rajeev Dhar, an old acquaintance. A number of activities like *Langdi-Kabbadi, Sudarshan-Chakra* etc helped bring the stress level down. The group was enlightened by a brief discourse by Pt. Pawan Pandita, who elaborated on the belief that leads to the ritual of *Pann*. Pawan ji also emphasized on the need of the hour to get together for spreading the message of enrichment of our culture. "*Pann-Naveed*" was also distributed on the occasion. Special words of appreciation went to Smt. Kiran Bharti, who had prepared *roths* of various shapes and sizes like *Samavar, Khos*, Kashmir map etc.

At Jammu, Joint Forum of K P Organizations held a demonstration in front of Press Club, Panun Kashmir (Ajay Chrungoo) organized a seminar to pay tributes to martyrs,Dr Agnishekhar's group organised a meeting to pay tributes to the martyrs who laid down their lives during the militant violence in the State. Eloquent tributes were also paid to all those nationalist people as well as members of the security forces who gave supreme sacrifices while fighting terrorism.

Paying rich tributes to Pandit Tika Lal Taploo who laid down his life on this day 24 years back, they said the names of Pandit Taploo and other martyrs of the community, including Pt Prem Nath Bhat and Sarwanand Premi will be written in golden letters in the annals of our history. BJP Legislature Party leader Ashok Khajuria, Party National Executive member and chief spokesperson of the State, Dr Jitendra Singh, President ASKPC, H L Chatta, H N Jatu, president AIKPC, Dr R L Bhat, national vice president JKVM, its state president B L Bhat, D N Kissu of NCMCC, Virender Raina, H L Bhat national general secretary JKVM, Kashmiri Lal, Dr A N Pandita, chairman P N B Memorial Trust, KP Sabha General Secretary Ashok Bradoo and Dr. K. L. Chowdhury also paid tributes to martyrs.

In memory of Kashmiri Pandit Amar Shaheeds who sacrificed their lives for the cause of the country, a two day programme was observed by Amar Balidan Trust on September 13 & 14 at Martand Surya Bhawan, Paloura, Jammu. The Trust arranged *Maha Shradhanajli* function on September 13, which was attended by a large number of people. Rich tributes where paid to martyrs especially Pt. Tika Lal Taploo & Pt Prem Nath Bhat. Swami Kumar Ji was the chief guest of this programme.

Functions to pay homage to martyrs were also organized at Kashmir Bhawans at Bangalore, Chandigarh, Mumbai and Pune where large gatherings of our community members offered floral tributes, lighted candles and recalled the sacrifice of hundreds of our members who were mercilessly killed by our tormentors.

- *Naad* Bureau, with Inputs from Manoj Bhan

OPERATION SADBHAVANA AND THE RECENT CONTROVERSY

Col Tej K Tikoo, Ph.d.



The former Army Chief, Gen V K Singh (Retd.), was recently in the news for many wrong reasons. By the very nature of their profession, Army Chiefs are trained and taught to shoot from the hip. Therefore, it is highly advisable for them not to face the media, unless extremely inescapable. As is well known, Gen V K Singh and the Union Government did not enjoy a good relationship during the Army Chief's tenure. Part of the blame lies with the bureaucracy which, right from independence, has ensured that the Army is kept out of any decision-making loop, including involving issues having serious security implications for the country.

The present controversy arose when a national daily published a report concerning the misuse of 'Intelligence' funds, as also about the role and functioning of one of the Intelligence outfits; TSD (Technical Surveillance Division). The timing of the expose and the fact that it was the same newspaper that had earlier tried to create a sensation by obliquely hinting that Gen V K Singh had attempted or threatened to stage a coup, added to the general belief among the people that the Government was trying to 'Fix' the General for having shared the dais with their *bete noire*, Narender Modi, the BJP's Prime Ministerial candidate, at a very successful rally of the ex-servicemen at Rewari. Incidentally, the rally had been organised by Gen V K Singh.

During an interview conducted by a seasoned and aggressive news anchor of a well known television channel, Gen V K Singh said certain things which are well known but never spoken of. Such revelations fall within the ambit of 'Official Secrets Act' and are not allowed to be revealed even by an ordinary jawan, leave alone by a former Army Chief. Irrespective of the grave provocation and literally being driven to the wall, the former Army Chief should not have fallen for the bait. Needless to say, his revelation has done enormous damage to the great work Army has done in the Valley ever since the 1947-48 Indo-Pak war, and particularly during the last quarter of a century. It has also dented the enormous popularity that Gen Singh enjoyed among the service veterans.

Without going into this controversy, I am confining myself to 'Operation Sadbhavana' in which Army has been involved during its operations in J&K after 1989. Militancy/terrorism/proxy war/insurgency (call it by any name you choose), is a politico-military problem. Or to put it simply, it is a political problem with a military angle. Tackling it by purely military means or only through political initiatives will never resolve the issue. Both have to work hand in hand. Military responsibility is to control and minimise violence so that the civilan government is allowed to carry out effective governance. However, the very fact that violence has reached a level that is beyond the scope and capability of the local police to handle, pre-supposes the fact that effective governance by the local administration is not possible. To those of us who were eye witnesses to the collapse of civil administration in the early years of militancy in the Valley in 1989-90, it was evident that governance even in its rudimentary form did not exist and the administrative infrastructure had all but ceased to exist. The instruments of governance were so deeply subverted that practically no developmental work could be undertaken.

Such absence of governance creates a vacuum which militants exploit to their advantage. Under these circumstances, militant violence, coupled with non-existent administration, gives rise to resentment among the people at large. Militants and their over ground political masters and sympathisers, through their well oiled propaganda machinery, exploit this resentment through targeted disinformation campaign , giving rise to disgruntlement among all sections of society, particularly among the youth. These youth then become easy hunting ground for the militants to recruit into their cadres. It is here that Army gets involved in a purely civilian administrative matter for the simple reason that it alone enjoys freedom of movement with relative security. Its presence even in the remotest areas gives it the reach to

deliver governance even to the most needy.

Indian Army runs two Corporate Social Responsibility Projects - *Sadbhavana* in Jammu and Kashmir and *Good Samaritan* in the North East, both areas facing serious insurgency situation. These operations are carried out to provide infrastructure, education and health services, etc., to the local population. Objective of these projects is to assess the problems of the populace and try to alleviate their sufferings in the absence of any remedial mechanism which would otherwise be available in the form of functional civil administration. During the past over two decades, the Army and other security forces have undertaken various projects under Operation Sadbhavna by improving the infrastructure in the State. This includes the construction and repair of roads, culverts, bridges, bus stands, wind mills and starting some hydroelectricity projects, etc. In the health sector, it establishes and operates medical camps, distributes medicines to the patients and the needy and issues and equips the Primary Health Centres (PHC) with medical equipment, ambulances, etc. As far as the Education sector is concerned, the Army provides infrastructure, like schools, classrooms, library, laboratory, computers, toilets, etc. Army also provides books to the children and other equipment and computers to some needy children and generators to schools. It also helps meritorious students by providing scholarships and monitory assistance, etc..

At the Humanitarian level, Operation Sadbhavana is involved in helping senior citizens, widows, orphans, disabled, destitutes and such other weaker sections of the insurgency-hit areas, particularly in the rural and less developed regions of the State. One of the most successful initiatives undertaken as part of the said operation has been the organising of trips for the local youth and old people to other parts of the country for excursion, religious pilgrimage, *Bharat Darshan*, etc. These tours have exposed the children at an impressionable age to the geniunely secular compostion of India and has helped counter the militant propaganda that "India is a Hindu country imposing itself on the Muslims of the State."

There are numerous other such activities which the Army undertakes to win the 'Hearts and Minds' of the local population, with the aim of weaning away the youth from the militants and ensuring that their support system in the general population dries up.

It is believed that the latest budget of 'Operation Sadbhavna' is nearly Rs 200 crores. There is a general perception that these funds are spent by the Army as it wishes. However, that is not the correct situation. For Operation Sadbhavna, pre and post audited funds, with laid down deliverables and procedures, are alloted in the defence budget. Though no objective/ scientific study of the effects of operation Sadbhavna have been carried out till now, there is no denying the fact that Kashmiris and people living in the border areas, have enormously benefitted by the schemes launched under this project.

It is a different matter that the ungrateful population in Kashmir thinks that whatever is done for them is their birth right and they must continue to shout '*Hum Kya Chahte Azadi*' and '*Pakistan se kya rishta - La Illah-e- illallah*'.

It is pertinent to mention here that the funds provided for carrying out various tasks under 'Operation Sadbhavana' are different from those funds which are provided for 'Intelligence' purposes. The latter are meant to develop sources and for pre-empting any risk that known terrorist organisations pose to national assets. ■

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT
Workshop on Sharda Script

Special Centre for Sanskrit Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University has joined hands with Millennium India Education Foundation Delhi to organise a free 3 - day Workshop on Sharda Script learning in JNU New Campus from November 8-10, 2013.

The objective of the workshop is to make an attempt to revive the Sharda script so that our community is able to develop manpower who can read and write this script and decipher more than 30000 manuscripts lying untranslated. The broader objective is to revive the KP culture and traditions which is waning fast.

This information amongst community members is circulated to enable them register for this very important workshop well in time. For any further information, please contact :

Dr Uday Kakroo / H L Wangnoo
09810301261 (M)/ 0931264220

MUSICAL VALLEY

Alka Lahori

Singing paeans in praise of Islam, a Kashmiri scholar (of insignificant credentials of course) writes as introduction to his long essay on library movement in Kashmir, that its (Islam's) advent 'inaugurated a reign of intellectual liberty in Kashmir... in keeping with the injunctions of the Prophet that acquisition of knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim'.

It set me on a thinking mode, that quietly history must be doing its job— recording events and 'epoch making' actions of dramatis persona of our times. History is merciless, it spares none. Now that everything in Kashmir, right from religion to culture, to dress code and entertainment quotient in everyday life, is weighed in terms of its Islamic jurisprudence and Quoranic interpretation, I wonder how history will judge the emergence of Jihadi/Wahabi cult of Islam which has 'unleashed intellectual subjugation and cerebral bankruptcy, where mind is no longer free from fear and where the knowledge is shackled and subjective, where the society is fragmented by communal divides, where words do not come from the depths of truth and conviction but from political expedience and for selfish ends, where tireless striving stretches its arm towards more and more conflict and anarchy, where the clear stream of reason has strayed from its course, where the mind is led forward not by faith in fellow human being, but into ever shrinking/stinking thought and actions of Syed Ali Shah Geelani and his ilk.

Not going into the merits of last month's Zubin Mehta's musical concert in the valley, which created more controversy than symphony, I better stick to my subject about the tradition and free flow of music in everyday life of a common Kashmiri. It was everywhere and all pervading — in temples, shrines, mausoleums, paddy fields, cottage industry of carpet weaving and papier-mâché, even open spaces and roads. There was nothing Islamic or un-Islamic about it, it was sheer means to make the drudgery of daily life into pure bliss, the ultimate objective of life. As a matter of fact, in the temples and shrines, music (devotional) in the form of singing *Leelas* and *Darood-khani* was encouraged as it was believed to lead to emotional catharsis or purgation of feeling of anxiety and save the society from disastrous consequence of frustrations of pent-up emotions.

No two opinions about the fact that music is food for soul, it has power to heal and replenish the body, calm and soothe nerves, uplift and elevate spirits, serenade the soul. A soulful piece of devotional music has potential to generate divine energy and connect with the God, the master orchestrator, who with the wave of baton synchronizes the interplay of various elements and matters in the universe.

Perhaps in no other community in India has music been the focal point of life than Kashmir. At a Kashmiri wedding, both Pandit and Muslim, it is mandatory to play Chhakri through the duration of the event which can extend even up to ten days. As musical evenings are always a much awaited fare at such social dos, there are special compositions for such events which can be played to the accompaniment to the *Tumbakhnari* and *Naut* beats.

In the days of yore, especially in the countryside, the enchanting notes would waft through the air from the distant paddy fields where a whole group of peasants, including their children and womenfolk, would sing in melodious chorus while doing cultivation chores like seedling, planting or de-weeding. After days of hard labour during harvest time, the male members of the village would gather at a vantage point under a tree to sing the lyrics of Mehmood Gami, Rasul Mir *et al* to the beats of earthen *Naut* (pitcher). And the musical *Hol, hol hol*, the cart pushers would let out in sing-song manner while taking their load to uphill destinations, would have inspired a whole generation of modern day

composers to fit in the lyrics in those magical sounds. Also the long and much awaited visits of *Ladi Shah* (the Bard) whose musical compositions, though simple and monotonous but laced with heavy duty humour and satire, was enough to touch off bouts of laugh riot in the entire neighbourhood.

In Kashmir poetry flowed freely and that should speak the presence of music in every aspect of life. Even the Kalhan's epic *Rajtarangini*, the story of the kings of Kashmir, is the history written in artistic verse. Not to speak of Kashmir's unique contribution to the world of music, hundred-stringed instrument—the *Santoor*. As a matter of fact, the range of notes on its spectrum is synonymous with the variety of music present in valley and its environment—the rhythm of the rivers, the majesty of mountains, the meandering of meadows, everything in perfect and musical consonance with mother Nature. The enchanting bliss can only be experienced and not explained.

Explain though one can, but only the divine curse which has bedevilled my beloved valley. The agents of devil have turned it into an abode of evil, where there is no room for divine notes and symphonies, where strands of reason and logic have been relegated to the dark corners of the dingy hole. While Grand Mufti's proclamations 'Music is un-Islamic' early this year forced the all woman musical band *Pragaash* bid good-bye to their musical ambitions, the boycott call given by hardliners and separatist bands for Zubin Mehta concert (organized by German embassy) has brought, among other things, the cultural downhill slide of the valley to the full glare of the world at large. These anarchists are the off-shoot of the same sect propagating the cult of Islam among their young ones which, ironically, promises them company of 72 nautch (singing/ dancing) girls as reward for carrying out *jihad* in the name of Islam around the world. ■

HEARING ON AIKS WRIT PETITION

SUPREME COURT SEEKS ACTION TAKEN REPORT

The Civil Writ Petition (CWP) filed by All India Kashmiri Samaj, which was due for hearing in 2011, finally came up for hearing on September 20, 2013. Filed in 2006 under Article 32 of the Constitution and v/s Union of India & ANR raises several issues regarding the fundamental rights like the dignity of citizens and right to constitutional protection, particularly with reference to the rights of displaced, exiled, deprived and oppressed community of Kashmiri Pandits who were targeted and made victims of terrorism in the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

During the 14th hearing of the case on September 20,2013 the initial prayer to the Apex Court included *inter alia* issuance of a white paper, declaring Kashmiri Pandits as "Internally Displaced Persons", consulting KPs as stake holders and taking them/their representatives on board in all the negotiations and discussions concerning Kashmir, CBI led investigation and prosecution of the culprits of massacres and murders of Kashmiri Pandits; ejection of all illegal encroachments on the Pandit properties, passage of Temples and Shrine Bill and many other issues of immediate and long term concern for the beleaguered and dispossessed community.

Pleading the case before the Hon'ble Supreme Court, advocate T. K. Ganjoo and his equally worthy team including Rajiv Talwar, sought to know whether mandatory sanction under the J&K Distress Sales Act (1997) had been obtained from the State Government with respect to the sale/purchase of the migrant properties after 1997. The Attorney, representing the J&K Government sought some more time for furnishing the full details about the issue. Another issue to which the attention of the Court was drawn was about the action taken report (ATR) from the Govt. regarding the concerns raised by the petitioner *i.e.* AIKS in its petition.

Acknowledging the AIKS contention, the Hon'ble Court has instructed the State Govt to file following reply within six weeks:

a) File an affidavit to show the mandatory sanction for the sale and purchase of properties belonging to Kashmiri Migrants post-1997 under the J&K Distress Sales Act.

b) File an action taken report.

Dr. Romesh Raina
General Secretary, AIKS

REFERENCES OF LAW AND ORDER SYSTEM IN *RAJTARANGINI*

Gautam Kaul



Kalhana's famous work, *Rajtarangini,* is the first set of writings which is important in understanding the history of North India and particularly the politics of the 6th century AD. While there is some difference of opinion on the authenticity of the early parts of this book, the later narrative seems to bear the stamp of true facts, because Kalhana evidently had in his possession original source of information culled from documents, inscriptions and contemporary evidence.

Kalhana's work, therefore has become the first base material for research scholars to use to know how the affairs of the State, public administration, social life and politics of kings and princes during the 6th and the 7th century existed. It's a narrative full of interesting data and an essential reading for anyone venturing into starting his own study of matters that interest him.

My interest was obviously all things related to the management of law and order prevailing in the jurisdiction of the kings who ruled in the time when Kalhana lived and wrote his observations. The very length of this work tells us of the rise and fall of some of the dynasties and the achievements of the rulers and the great errors they committed. The book also gives us an idea of the social decay that had crept into the society under review and that also happens to be the pre-Muslim period of the land that we know now as Jammu, Kashmir, south Afghanistan and the frontier lands of Kandahar.

Allied observations and historical evidence available for the 7th century AD to this whole area of north India, suggests a lawless state, with high incidence of crime, social insecurity, intense political intrigues and treason. In such an environment the question of how did the law and order machinery work and how those assigned the duties to implement the orders of law and order, carried their duties, called for ferreting out the data existing in the stories told in this book and also read between the lines otherwise.

The life and times of *Rajtaragini* seen in our present day context, give us a familiar feeling that what civil society went through their existence, was no different than what is happening today. From the description of the practice of black-marketing in goods, flood management and travails of famine, we get an idea of how the administrative system existed. Obviously the ruler had a huge machinery of officials working to oversee the land and collect taxes, starting from the lowly *Gramkayastha* to the top positions of *Mantrins.* Somewhere in the middle tier, existed the city police chief called the *Nagaradhipa.*

In the 7th and 8th century AD the most important urban centre in Kashmir was Srinagar. Early maps drawn by foreign travellers showed Srinagar still being the only big town even upto 15th cent AD. That being the case, Srinagar town was also the seat of wealth.

We find in the early 8th century AD a mention of the first police official called Chalithaka who is mentioned as a *Nagaradhipa* and supervising him and his like, was the person who carried powers of both judiciary and the executive and was referred to as *Sarvadhikaranas – thairavochatta.* Sanskrit scholar R. S. Pandit has explained the meaning as one 'who cuts at the root of the stability of all tribunals'. Thus the police official of the day had functions of what we find today in the Commissioner of Police system, and Chalithaka was the Commissioner of Police for Srinagar!

In Indian literature of the medieval times, we have two early references relating to activities under the head of law and order.

In the *Ramayana* of Valmiki, Lord Hanuman gives a narration of the prevailing city police

patrolling in Lanka. Lord Hanuman tells Lord Ram that he found traffic in Lanka city orderly with *Dandanayakas* (crime dispensers) moving on the streets carrying long sticks who used them to keep the streets clear off loitering persons.

Valmiki wrote the epic poem during the 1st cent AD, which clearly reflects a system of police patrolling in urban centres in north India fairly early in time.

Again in Kalidas's *Shakuntalam* written during the 6th century AD, when the fisherman is brought to the court of king Bharata and accused of having stolen the king's ring, a court minister asks for an inspection of the ring which is handed to him. The minister inspects the ring and then brings it close to his nose. He then announces that the ring was indeed not stolen by the fisherman but the ornament came out of the stomach of the fish which the suspect had caught. Here was the first case of use of smell as evidence to clear the innocence of a suspect. Kalhana provides to us a third evidence of good police investigation in a story he narrates in his book.

It was during the reign of King Chandrapida (713 – 720 AD), that a Brahmin woman appeared before the King who complained of the murder of her husband by an unknown person. The complainant said she was not knowing why her faultless husband should be killed, but suspected a young Brahmin of a place called Maksikaswamin, for the crime.

The King ordered the suspect to be produced before him in the court. When the suspect was brought to the court, he informed the King that he was well versed in *tantrik* rituals, and would be able to overcome all ordeals undertaken by the police to get a forced confession. The King therefore should consider other fair means to prove his guilt or innocence. The general method of proving innocence was the test by fire. The King had to enforce the practice for all ordinary subjects, but a learned Brahmin was a challenge for it involved killing him.

Kalhana recounts that the King had a dream in which God appeared and directed the King to take the suspect to a temple premises, where the floor of the temple be strewn with fine powdered rice. The suspect was to be asked to walk over the powdered surface three times. The footprints of the suspect were to be matched with the footprints left at the scene of crime. In this way the suspect was nailed.

In *Rajtarangini* (Fourth Tarang, verse 81 to 108) the story is scattered enough to indicate a divine intervention to help the King to come to his decision. A modern time policeman would do a swift job of getting a foot cast of the suspect and compare it with the suspect's footprint found at the spot and settle the matter. In any case in *Rajtarangini* the King and his police officer, Chalithaka, share the honours of detecting a killer on their land using fair and forensic means!

Kalhana also mentions that the *Nagaradhipa* was also known as *Nagarprabhu* or even *Nagardhyaksha*. But in each case there is no elaboration of the duties of these titles except as controllers of crimes. Mention of the same office is found in another contemporary work *Kattaimata Kavyam* written during the reign of King Jayapida (751 – 783 AD), where it is said that the *Nagardhipa* was charged to work as censor for good morals, collect taxes from prostitutes and deal with violations of restrictions imposed on these *nagarvadhus*.

The nomenclature of the police officer of the court in Kashmir seems to have undergone mutation as time went by before the advent of the Muslim rulers. In the reign of King Yasakhara (939 – 948 AD) the police chief is now known as *nagaradhikarta*. He is obviously a really corrupt official who 'made piles of money through four prefectures in the city...'. The police official is also now given duties of revenue collection and we see here the development of the zamindari system which flowered well under the Moghals.

Kalhana informs us that during the reign of the Lohara kings, the police system improved considerably from the old bad days of the past. Even during the uncertain periods of rule of King Jayasimha, police administration continued to show improvement with able leadership being provided by the 'police commissioner' Dhanya.

For a court official of the time and with the kind of administrative powers bestowed on the office, Dhanya comes out as an extraordinary person who lived and worked in the kingdom. Dhanya was an able administrator, 'who made sincere efforts to remove maladministration in the district where he was appointed and where misrule prevailed'. He checked gross abuse in

trade practices and was also responsible for abolishing an existing law 'which sought punishment of the head of the family for any lapses of chastity of the inmates'. Kalhana goes on to say that Dhanya 'with his single minded efficiency and devotion remained a friend of his subjects'. But Dhanya also got influenced with the enormous powers he wielded, and he succumbed to prosecuting people under his charge. It was alleged that he punished persons who had sexual intercourse with dancing girls who had been kept in households as per customary traditions. Yet 'when Dhanya died, there was no money found in his home for the performance of his funeral'. But all good things must come to an end.

Jayasimhas's reign was followed by the emergence for the first time of a woman ruler, Queen Didda (980 – 1003 AD). She was a tyrant without morals, and in the annals of the history of Kashmir, there was never one such ruler earlier or any one who followed her. Her reign was marked by court murders and minister's intrigues, incestuous conducts, 'shameless liaison which made disgusting reading. It was the untimely death of her son, Abhimanyu, and her sorrow, which saw her change for the better'.

In her change of royal conduct, Didda was helped by her Police Chief, Bhayya, 'a man of good conscience'. Bhayya fostered in Didda the spirit of philanthropy and a love for her subjects whom she treated not long ago as mere vermin. Kalhana comments that an official who ' has shed his severity and is capable of securing for a king willing homage as Hemanta makes the Sun enjoyable, is in truth difficult to find'.

A reading of *Rajtarangini* gives us an impression that the greatest police chief of the kingdom of Kashmir during the medieval era is Vijayasinha. This super cop served the people during the short rule of King Kalasa (1081–1089). Vijayasinha showed himself as a professional police leader who made a passion out of maintenance of law and order, suppression of internal disorder and the elimination of anti-social elements.

Vijayasinha started his career as a 'keeper of falcons' but the abilities and advice he offered to his king got him a promotion as a police chief, and a further quick promotion as the head of the city prefect. Kalhana observes the choice was a wise one 'for in a short time Vijayasinha had destroyed all the burglars who operated in Srinagar'.

The police during any internal strife, was found to be providing a backup service to the kingdom's armed forces. The Police Chief assumed a subordinate military role to perform his military duties. The head of the local army was termed Kapanadhipathi (commander-in-chief).Kalhana reports that when Uchchala and Susala, local chieftains, attacked King Harsha in 1101 AD, the city police chief, Naga, was given the charge of the defence of Srinagar. A revolt in the army broke out in 1120 AD and the then police chief, Janaka, with his staff protected the city from robbers and helped the ruler, King Susala, to escape.

All police chiefs held their jobs at the pleasure of their kings. But in times of insecurity more trust came to be bestowed on their abilities to deliver and protect the royals. (Obviously things have not changed much today in Democratic India or J&K!).

By the 12th century era, the police chiefs had acquired a role in the kingdom's administration second only to the local prime minister and on occasions more powerful to even decide on the selection of the rulers. But then those who rule by the sword, occasionally ended their lives on the blade of the sword.

The police chiefs of the day always faced this danger.

Kalhana reports in his massive reputed work, that when King Uchchala was busy putting down a revolt of Damarasa, a local chieftain, the police chief of Srinagar, Chudda, was busy in hatching a conspiracy against the king. He had the gumption to enter the inner palace of his king along with his conspirators and killed the king without mercy (1101 AD). Soon enough when king Gajjaka ascended the throne, the reverse happened and the police Chief suffered a quick death by the sword.

Kashmir Valley continued to suffer decades of misrule. When Islam stepped in, it promised a relief from chaos and cruelty. But this spring did not last long and more destruction of people and the land continued. ■

THE DREAM HOMELAND OF KASHMIRI PANDITS.

A. N. Zutshi

Kashyapmaer, the original and exclusive homeland of Kashmiri Pandits, when it came into existence several thousand years back, has now turned into an alien land for the aborigines!

Seven centuries of persistent religious persecution of Kashmiri Pandits, by the alien Islamic zealots, led to equal number of migrations by them, beginning middle 14th century to the last decade of 20th century. This has been the cause of our population drastically tumbling down from 100% to 1 or 0 .5% (exact figure not known) of the total population of the valley. Zenith of the persecution reached in 1989-90 when armed insurgents, at the behest of our tormentor neighbour Pakistan, in collusion with the separatists and the home grown terrorists, surged in the valley in hordes to struck terror and destruction. Kashmiri Pandits, the soft target, bore the brunt of ruthless killings and every other unbearable torture, and under the further threat of wholesale annihilation and humiliation to their respect and honour, specifically the womenfolk, migrated *en-masse* from the land of their birth and scattered far and wide in the country. Till then, despite every sort of on-slaught of killings, torture, humiliation and intimidation, they, owing to their peace-loving and timid nature, seldom offered any cognizable resistance, surprisingly even when they were the sole inhabitants of the valley. This could, perhaps have made some difference and delayed the exoduses for some time, but not avoided these altogether. The last exodus (1989-90) was the culmination of the persecution. Immediate aftermath of this unprecedented event was that the community in exile, feeling the pangs of no-whereness and homelessness, became victim of unparalleled physical, emotional and mental trauma. Now, the limit of toleration, which had overflown the banks, had reached. So, to find some way to come out of the helpless situation, very eminent and respected personalities of the community got together and framed the organization Panun Kashmir. It is not that the Pandits till then had no organization or body to spearhead their causes/issues, but owing to the unprecedented situation caused by their *en-masse* exodus, an organization comprising mature, young, energetic and above all sincere minds was the need of the hour.

Situation in the valley and of the displaced community was vigorously deliberated upon in the meetings held by the new organization. Lot of churning took place and finally an idea of having a separate homeland, free from acrimonies sprouting from rank fundamentalism and Islamic zealotry, of the original inhabitants of the land, sprouted. Panun Kashmir raised the banner and a "Marg Darshan Resolution" calling for the establishment of a separate homeland was adopted by the organization in a meeting held in December 1991, at Jammu. This resolution was later endorsed by majority of the community, of course, with some exceptions having their genuine/ingenuine reservations.

The proposed Homeland demand, though raised exclusively by the Kashmiri Pandits, who naturally would be the main component of it, is, I presume in the opinion of majority of the community, however, not to be an exclusive Hindu Homeland, but encompassing other nationalist entities having true faith in the Indian Constitution and national ethos. This welcome development was, however, soon followed by some after-shocks, important one being the split of the organization, first into two and then three splinters headed surprisingly, by three As *viz.* S/shri Agnishekhar, Ashwini Chrangoo and Ajay Chrangoo. Presently there are, perhaps, four splinters? The fourth splinter (when came into existence?) also headed by an A, Shri Ashok Dhar. This sad development hindered the onward movement of the cause. Although all the factions of Panun Kashmir alongwith many other organisations/groups stand for the primary cause of homeland, but the fight is not a united one. Every faction, in order to show its one-up-manship pulls the strings from its own direction. This has caused the movement going much weak. Besides this, we are often confronted with a taunt, which, of course, is a bitter reality, of "four people and three organisations/leaders", sometime back also uttered by Chief Minister

Omar Abdullah,during a T.V interview/chat.

The height of all this apathy is that the community has not only several, but many organisations crossing roads with one another. So minuscule a community, with only a few lakh population, and so many organisations and leaders! *Barah Kuli Terah Meith* very aptly applies here. One really and really feels ashamed when the taunt of a disjointed community is expressed in a forum, meeting or any get-together. My humblest appeal (I am sure entire community would also join me) to the torch bearers of the community, therefore, would be to strive for the much needed unity (one-ness) of all the organizations/factions, if not on all the issues confronting us, let it be at least on a 'Common Minimum Programme', foremost, of course, being fight for the separate homeland. Sometime past threatening letters were sent to the community members living in settlements created for them in the valley, warning of dire consequences if they do not leave the valley immediately. This development speaks volumes about the sinister designs of persecutors, thus invoking an earnest need for demanding the separate homeland.

I am glad to state here that a welcome happening, though small but significant, within the community has recently taken place, which augurs well for the cause of homeland. This is the launching of a Community Radio Station "Radio Sharda, 90.4 FM, *Booziv te khoesh rooziv*". Radio Sharda is available on internet also on the website *"www.radiosharda.com"*. We the entire community should salute and be proud of such heroes/gems of our society, whose tireless efforts made it possible. It has virtually given us a sense of belonging (to Kashmir) and is sure to help in forging a bonding/ unity in the community. This vital organ has begun bearing fruit. Majority of the community families, in the mornings and evenings, switch on their radio sets to hear Radio Sharda. Besides very fruitful programmes and discussions being broadcast on the radio, our language and culture is bound to get a big boost. Doubtlessly, our rich history is being re-lived. Not much time ago, another welcome development, a homeland TV station was also established after much hard work put in by a group of our younger generation heroes, but unfortunately it has not moved much ahead. Seldom do we hear or witness any activity taking place there. Wish it a great success, so that the community is also helped by its fruitful programmes and discussions etc. Although a good beginning has been made, but it is just a spec of dust against a big storm. We have to go a long, long way which is full of hitches and hurdles.

First and foremost the daunting task is to achieve unity among various organizations/ factions of the community. The task, going by past efforts, is uphill, but not impossible, if good sense prevails upon all the right thinking and visionary people of these organizations/factions. They shall have to sit together and think only of the benefits of unity, leaving all their personal agenda aside. Plato, the great philosopher, on the unity of communities, has said "The members of the community must make a unity; they must learn that they are members of one another; and that they owe to one another certain amenities and obligations." Once we take up the task committedly, success in realising the dream of homeland is sure to be achieved some day. Next, on the priority list is the establishment of necessary fundamental infrastructure. This infrastructure shall have to be built steadily, bit by bit. Various important primary institutions, both professional and non-professional, are needed, which include a University, a Science and Technology college and a Medical college with an associated hospital. *Prima facie*, the project/plan sounds fantastic and sweet, but taking it to its logical conclusion appears "utopian" because the task is most challenging. The first requirement for this giant project is huge finances, and manpower for macro and micro management. As for the finances, there is no dearth of it both within and outside the community. The sources wherefrom funds could be raised include central and state governments, various philanthropic and corporate bodies and last but not the least, the community itself. The state government, however, has all along not been favourably disposed towards the community (a stark reality). It, instead of helping, will create only hurdles and impediments, as we have been witnessing right from our exodus, latest example being the unnecessary dilly-dallying in the passage of Shrines and Temples Bill in the State Legislature and solving other pressing problems facing the community. Prevailing upon the Central govt. through sympathetic political and social samaritans is sure to help. Various philanthropic

and corporate bodies can be of great help. Within the community, we have a large number of trusts and bodies which have enough, funds and can spare these for the immediate needs, so that a start can be made. Besides, the community at large can also be called upon to contribute. Once the institutions start coming up/functioning, it will have cascading multi-faceted benefits. Besides acquiring knowledge, professional and non-professional within the State environs and close by to their near and dear ones, our boys and girls would earn the most needed opportunity of mingling, interacting and understanding one another within the community and possibly culminating in building relationships, thus reducing the chances of outside community marriages which, now-a-days is a common spectacle, particularly among our daughters, and shrinking our roots. Meeting the requirement of manpower for the suggested institutions is perhaps not as big a task. The requirement can largely be met from our own community which has a vast treasure of young, energetic and capable professionals and non professionals, who have already made an astounding impact in every field of life in and outside. Many, if not most of them, would be readily agreeable to lend a helping hand in the biggest endeavour of the community. If need be, help can be sought from other outside sources as well. My earnest wish is that the institutions to be established be named after our community heroes and martyrs, who have played unforgettable role for its welfare and upliftment.

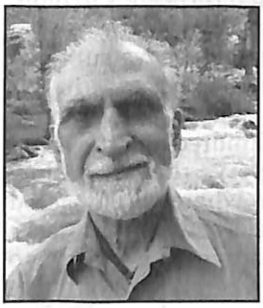
After the establishment of the said institutions one by one, our future generations shall not have to bank upon the reserved seats in other institutions of the country, which facility for sure is not going to last for too long. A major percentage of seats in the institutions to be established would naturally be for our own children and remaining can be offered to students of other communities, purely on merit basis without any ethnic or religious bias.

The most important factor that is sure to cause greatest hurdle in the fight for our homeland, however, is the numbers for whom it has to be. Going by the present trend of fast decline in our numbers, the dream of a separate homeland is not only difficult but appears impossible also, unless we rise to the occasion and pursue the means to regain the lost ground to some extent. Reasons for this decline in our population are many, many of which are of our own making. Some of these have been highlighted in my write-up "We need to reform" published in the February, 2012 issue of community magazine "Naad", I have tried, therein, to suggest some measures to overcome the issue to some extent .How far these can be adopted is for us, the community, and its leadership to take up and strive for. According to well placed sources, our population immediately after exodus all over the globe was seven lakh. But, keeping in view the factors such as the exodus of our daughters marrying outside the community in hordes, and our sons also going for outside community marriages and some assimilating in those communities, adopting a single/no child norm by many married couples, high rate of mortality in comparison to new births and other stress and strain related problems having originated from the feeling of rootlessness etc., our population is sure to have substantially come down from those seven lakhs. And, if the situation is allowed to continue like that, the position, in the course of a few years, would be that we may have to count ourselves on finger tips. So, when there are not adequate numbers to live in the dream homeland, what would be the purpose of struggling for the cause? Warning bells are ringing loud and fast, and we shall have to take serious note of that, if we want and have to survive as a community and be counted as such in the national and international arena. Time has, therefore, come to plunge in the war zone, with full might, and strive for our survival as a community and to be reckoned as such, enabling us to fight for the dearest cause of a separate homeland. GOD IS SURE TO HELP US, IF WE HELP OURSELVES. ◘

RETURN OF PANDITS TO KASHMIR: A MYTH OR A DISTANT REALITY

Dr P. L. Ganju

Blessed are those who live in the land of their birth,
They are doubly blessed if that is a paradise on earth.
Ere long, a humble, peace-loving soul, rose and grew,
In the Kashyapmar, before the advent of its goons.
He quietly chewed its venom and did not rue,
To return there to pray to the Lord of boons,
In the Holy Cave, to the benevolent Shiv,
To the chosen deities, ensconced in the woods,
To redeem the wailing Vale, now dreams away.
He lives, in exile, in fool's paradise, without a say.



With their faith rapidly vanishing in the politicians of the country, the Kashmiri Pandits now need an indigenous Cyrus, at the Centre, who would authorize them to go back to their homeland and rebuild their homes and temples, without any fret or fear. Zain-ul-Abidin has also to reincarnate in the Valley, to receive the beleaguered community, once again. It is all moonshine and a wishful thought, indeed !

Cyrus (the Great) was a generous Persian king, who had conquered the fabled city of Babylon, in NW Asia, in B.C. 539, laying the foundation of his famed Empire. When he entered the fabulous city of Babylon, its populace welcomed him with open arms. Cyrus did not interfere with the religions of his conquered territories and restored them their erstwhile religious symbols and temples, confiscated by their earlier cruel king. He also encouraged the Jews, living in the Babylonian captivity for about forty years, called the Exile, to go back to their homeland, Jerusalem, and rebuild their city and the temple (of Solomon). The benevolence of King Zain-ul-Abidin, is too well-known to need any elaboration here.

The Pandit from Kashmir is an enigmatic, incorrigible optimist, vowing to go back to his motherland, in spite of all the atrocities committed by the Islamist rulers of the land against his forefathers, for the last six centuries. They called him a *kafir,* converted him to Islam or, if he resisted, killed him. The Shahmiri Sultan, Sikander the Butshiken (1339-42) had boasted that he had eliminated Hinduism from the Valley, once for all. Yet, the Pandit rose, from his ashes, like the mythical phoenix. The Pandit community was, however, permanently reduced to a miserable minuscule minority, destined to suffer in the Muslim Period, except for some brief interludes, in the rule of Shahmiri king Zainulabidin and the Mughal Emperor Akbar. Thereafter, he had some breathing time in the Valley when it was offered to Maharaja Gulab Singh, for a price by the British, in 1846. After India gained Independence from the British, and the Valley of Kashmir from Maharaja Hari Singh, the Pandits were again bound to suffer under the new dispensation in the Valley. They were immediately shown the door leading to the plains of India, for their livelihood. The Pandits obliged without a murmur and left one after another, leaving behind their young kin and their oldies. Almost half of the Pandit population of the Valley was eased out in this way, for the next four decades. In 1989-90, the remaining half numbering about 3.5 lacs was forced out, *en masse,* from the Valley, by their own fellow Muslim brethren, in a highly shameful coup, unprecedented in the history of Kashmir.

It is relevant here to say a few words about the past glory of the Hindu Kashmir, called *Maej Kashir.* History of Kashmir is as old as the Rigveda. Soon, the Vedic culture spread through the length

and breadth of the Valley. It had reached the pinnacle of its glory in the time of some of its greatest kings, namely, Samdhimat, Lalitaditya, Avantivarman, etc. In its most prosperous times, the Valley had as many as 66063 villages (see *Lokaprakasha* of Ksemendra, 11th century A.D., or Sahibram's *Tirthsangriha*), or even more, counting 1,00,000 (*Tahriki Rashidi* of Sharifuddin, 1400 A.D), which figure Sir Aurel Stein considered as more authentic. The relevant verse, in the *Lokaprakasha*, regarding the number of villages in the valley, is reproduced below :

Sastir gram-sahasrani sastir gram-satani ca, Sastir gramas tryo grama hi etat Kashmiramandalam.

Sir Aurel Stein had toured the length and breadth of the Valley, while compiling data for his memoirs for *'Kalhana's Rajatarangini'* (1900 A.D.). He says that the countryside was littered with a large number of deserted villages, including their temple ruins, besides the existing ones. He opined that a more extensive irrigation system may have existed in the prosperous Hindu Period than what he actually saw there. On the basis of his observation, Stein says that the population of the Hindu Kashmir could have been much larger than what was counted in the census of 1891, which was 8, 14, 241, out of which the Pandits counted 60316, including 28,695 living in Srinagar and the four smaller towns. The remaining Pandits were distributed in the rural areas (see 'The Valley of Kashmir' by Sir Lawrence').

It is held that the total population of the Valley in 1835 was only 2, 00, 000. By 1891, *i.e.* within the next 56 years, it rose to 814241, as given above, in spite of the great famine of 1877-79. The enormous rise in the population of the Valley may, perhaps, be attributed to the ushering in of the peaceful chapter in the history of Kashmir, under the Hindu Dogra rulers.

The population of both the Muslims and the Pandits in the Valley swelled up further, in the subsequent 5-6 decades up to the time of Independence. The Pandit population in 1941 constituted 15 % of the total population of the Valley. It came down to a mere 5 % in 1981 (the figures are from Rahul Pandita's book 'Our Moon has Blood Clots' (2013) Apparently, the population of the Pandits, (as well as the Muslims), increased by leaps and bounds, in the wake of the peaceful Dogra era. However the population of the Pandits dwindled rapidly, on the heels of the Independence and the advent of the Awami Raj in the Valley. The great fall in their population, is attributed to their slow and steady migration out of the Valley during this period. It was then reduced to a dismal decimal fraction, after their mass flight in 1989-90.

The serial exoduses of the Pandits from the Valley has brought in its train a host of impediments, square on the face of the community, in its struggle for existence, in exile. In the pre-Independence exoduses, during the despotic rule in the Valley, the Pandits were mostly consumed in the vast Hindu population of the plains of India, up to recent years. If their loss to the community stands any testimony to the fate of the Pandits, who left the Valley in more recent times, who are in exile, now, there is no doubt that the community could have survived only in the land of their forefathers (as it had during the Dogra time), where they would interact with their kin and kindred and the other citizens of the land, to preserve their cherished culture and mother-tongue; where, in the sacred temple premises, they would converge, in large numbers, from different parts of the Valley, to pray and meet each other; where, more often, at their social functions, both in joy and sorrow, they would meet in large numbers to felicitate or sympathies with each other. All these events lent a sense of solidarity to the community in the Valley. However, after the Independence of the country, the Pandits were not destined to live there any longer to avail of these privileges. They perforce started migrating out of the valley for their livelihood, with the baggage of all the impediments for their survival in their exile.

Even as the Pandits were migrating out of the Valley, major anti-Pandit riots were staged in the Anantnag area, in which 'the Pandits were beaten up, their women raped' and several of their houses and the temples destroyed. This was one of the most turbulent periods in the political history of Kashmir, till that time, shaming even the wars of succession, in the time of the Sultans, in the Valley. Government of India imposed President's rule in the Valley, which lasted for about eight months, up to Nov. 1986.

The mayhem of the terrorists in the Valley, however, continued in the succeeding years. The

last (mercifully the last) mass exodus of the KPs took place in 1989-90, as mentioned above. As if this was not enough, the massacre of the Pandits, in the isolated villages continued unabated. For example, the terrorists dragged out seven KPs from their houses in Sangrampura village, in March 1997and gunned them down. The terrorists shot down 23 KPs, including women and children, in Wandhama, in Jan 1998. Yet, 24 more KPs, including infants, were shot dead in Nandigram, in March 2003 (see Rahul Pandita's book).

Lately, the terrorists also started targetting even some of the village Sarpanches, who were willing to cooperate with the state government, in the administration of the far flung rural areas. The gun- wielding infiltrators are still pouring in large numbers from across the border, specifically, to target the security personnel, guarding the peace of the Valley. Perhaps, they have also not yet completed their mission of Islamisation, in the Valley. It appears that they don't want to leave any stone unturned to see that the Pandits find it practically impossible to return and live there, once again. In the process, many precious young Muslim lives have also been lost.

After the Pandit exodus, in 1989-90, the radical Islamist movement in the Valley has been gaining support in the populace. The recent events in Kishtwar and other towns in South Kashmir are enough testimony to it, reflecting the mood of separatists.

In the meanwhile, during the last more than two decades, a new generation of young Kashmiris has come up in the Valley, under the coercive, yet bewitching, atmosphere of the Islamic fundamentalism. A new generation of young people has also come up in the so-called 'migrant' KP community, in exile, brought up in a free secular atmosphere. The young people of the two generations have not been left with any meeting ground in the Valley and may remain strangers for ever. Consequently, the Valley lost its earlier secular image and got transformed into a virtual Islamic sub-State of India, while the Pandits lost their landed property, culture and language in their exile.

From the events of the last quarter century in the Valley, after the Pandits were got rid of in 1989-90, it appears that chances of their return to their homeland to rebuild their community, are now quite bleak. Its return is not now in their own hands. It appears it is not in the hands of the State government either. Even the political fate of the Valley itself is a big quandary. Unfortunately, from being a vexed internal problem of India, as a part of its birth-pangs, our politicians internationalised it, by taking the aggression of Pakistan to the United Nations. However, whatever the repercussions of the delinquent move of India, to the solution of the vexed Kashmir, in future, the Nation has steadfastly projected Kashmir as an integral part of the Union even as it may seem to dither on the negotiating table. In the meantime, mercifully, the U.N. has also relented and kept the issue on the back- burner. Thereafter, the bilateral issue of Kashmir between India and Pakistan gradually turned messy, with some of the separatist organizations of the state also claiming their stake in the solution of complex Kashmir problem, leaving the Pandit gaping. Even as the talks between India and the so-called stake-holders are held in fits and starts, the foreign hand has not completely disappeared from the scene.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning here that Mehnaz Merchant, chairman of a media group, had written in an article in TOI (Oct.10, 2010), in advance of the visit of President Barack Obama, to address a joint session of Indian Parliament, that the President may announce that his country was not averse to India's membership of UNSC (without veto power), if India took some steps to resolve the Kashmir dispute with Pakistan, mollifying the latter. The title of the article, in reference, "Don't barter J&K for a UNSC seat" is self-explanatory. In short, the Kashmir problem has persisted to this day and got further entangled, thanks to the inaptitude of our politicians in statecraft and nation building.

The silent migration of the KPs from the Valley during the first four decades, after the Independence, would have surely sent a strong message to the Centre that it was not all well in the State, which boded ill for the secular aspirations of the country, in the long run. In spite of showering its bounties, on the State governments, ostensibly to keep the politicians of the state in good humour, the Pandits know, for certain, that the appeasement in the Valley has not borne fruit and has even proved counter-productive. While the leaders, at the helm of affairs in the Valley, changed their seats of power,

the communal politics of the State did not ebb in any regime. This not only worked to the detriment of the return of the Pandits to the Valley but also sent wrong signals to other dissident elements in the other states. Unfortunately, no concerted efforts are in view at the national level for an enduring solution of vexed problem of the J&K State. The future of the Kashmiri Pandit community is dependent on the future of Kashmir, not *vise versa.* Before resolving it, putting Kashmiri Pandits in the Valley is like putting the cart before the horse.

The apathy of the government for the resettlement of the minuscule community in the Valley, as it was there in 1947, has posed a strong threat to country's secular ethos and its integrity. The communal policy of the J&K may be remotely compared with the caste-ridden politics of the other states in India after independence. The gradual migration of the Pandits from the Valley may be deemed to be similar to the migration of the Brahmans from these states, after the rise of the other castes there. The two phenomena, however, did not pose similar problems to the young Nation, at large. While in Kashmir the exodus of a minuscule, religious Pandit minority, posed a serious threat to the religious demography of the state, no such threat was perceived in the other states, where only a small number of its majority population was migrating out of it, that too, perhaps, temporarily. For example, many of my South Indian Brahman colleagues have since long returned to their home states, after retirement.

Pandits, in exile, are not willing to go back to the valley and live there, under the unpredictable, communal atmosphere, prevailing there. Going by the statistics of the gun wielding infiltrators from across the border, the conditions are not rosy for the return of the Pandits. Some of the Pandits, however, do visit their homeland now, but just to touch their erstwhile cherished childhood landmarks, or the sacred feet of their deities, at the deserted temples, as if they were applying some kind of balm to their wounds of banishment. By now, most of the Pandit houses have either vanished or lie in a dilapidated condition, unsuitable for habitation. The temples are deserted, or are under the lock and key and barricaded, manned by CRP personnel, even as some of the deities therein are being attended to by a lone Muslim constable here, e.g. at the temple Ramachandrun, or a Sikh refugee there, e.g. at Pokhribal (the writer went to both these places in 2012). After these formalities, the KPs return quickly, empty handed, to their exile. They are, however, welcome to visit their motherland, again and again. Thereafter, while their Muslim brethren continue to beat the drum of Kashmiriyat in the Valley, Pandits live outside it, in exile, in fool's paradise.

The famous prophetic saying of the saint–poetess, Lal Ded, in the 14th century, has come back to us ringing loud and clear, in our predicament, in exile. Unfortunately, while we are unanimous in our resolve to go back to the Valley, there is no such unanimity among the members of the community as to how we would keep our flock together, till that time comes in the life of our community. More than two decades have already passed in our internal bickering, even as the pace of our dispersal and disintegration in the vast expanse of India has accelerated, year after year, and the polity in the Valley has made it still harder for us to return there.

Some of the impediments in our solidarity and ultimate survival in exile are perhaps of our own making. These include: our pattern of living (being separated from each other, in ones or twos, or in small clusters), our galloping out-of-the community marriages, our shrinking family sizes, our vanishing community priests, etc., These impediments are now manifest in our community, both in Jammu and Delhi, where most of the displaced community is situated, not to speak of the woes of our community members living in the other towns and cities of India, nay, all over the world. We must combat these impediments that the community is facing now. We have to look beyond our individual interests and think of the general welfare of the community, at large.

In short, while pondering over the changing socio-religious and political scenario in the Valley, it is clear that the return of the Pandit to the Valley is not yet foreseeable, in the near future. Now, our only bet is that we keep our community welded together till that illusive future, when we would demand our due space in the Valley, which one may call as *Panun Kashmi,* (or, say, Panditabad), our cherished dream.

(To be continued)

[The writer lives at Krishna Kunj Society, Jetalpur road, Vadodara]

KASHMIRI PANDITS: A QUESTION OF IDENTITY

M. K. Kaw



Kashmiri Pandits are Hindus from the northern State of Jammu & Kashmir in India. They generally belong to the Sarswat Brahmin caste. Historically, Kashmir has been renowned as a seat of learning and although their numbers are small, many of the Kashmiri Pandits have made significant contributions to different branches of knowledge.

When we Kashmiri Pandits speak of our identity, we often talk of our pure Aryan blood, which infiltrated into India at the time of the Aryan invasion. Latest research has proved that the Aryans were indigenous and did not invade India. Inbreeding has, however, ensured a somewhat peculiar physiognomy for Kashmiri Pandits with sharp features, a handsome aquiline nose and the occasional blue eyes!

I had thought for a long time that we had a special cuisine, our own musical instruments, the *rauf* dance, the *pheran*, architectural features and so on. But a few performances by the troupes of Central Asia organized by the ICCR laid these illusions to rest.

At last, it was while exploring the arid wastes of philosophy that I made the great discovery of what Kashmiriyat truly stood for. I had often wondered how Porus had compelled the great Alexander to return to Macedonia, when our later rulers had suffered ignominious defeats at the hands of Ghoris, Ghaznis, Nadir Shahs, and Babars *et al.* It was soon clear to me that the problem arose because of Buddhism and Advaita Vedanta.

Buddha had discovered that the world was a vale of sorrow and the best course was to exit from the race and become a *bikshu.* India became a land of mendicants and the bikshu became the hero of the youth. Sankaracharya tried his best to defeat the Buddhist philosophers in debates. When he failed, he thought it best to copy them and place the *sanyasi* at the top of the tree. Resultantly, the renunciate became the ideal hero for the youth. One can easily perceive that the change was just that of nomenclature.

Sankara taught that Brahman alone was real, the *jagat* or the universe was *mithya.* This statement was read with the analogy of the serpent and the rope. When someone saw a rope in the darkness, it gave rise to the illusion that it was a snake. Thus the seer was subjected to the illusion that he was confronting a snake and he reacted with the normal feelings of fear and trepidation.

Mayavaada was subjected to a variety of misinterpretations. The chief confusion it created was that the universe was an illusion. Realization thus consisted in piercing beyond the veil of illusion and seeing the Reality.

The greatest achievement of Kashmir Shaivism was that it considered both Shiva and Shakti to be real. There is an interesting story about how Sankara lost in argument to a bunch of ladies in Kashmir. These ladies resorted to a simple technique. They stopped feeding Sankara. Three days later, the great ascetic fell down in a rivulet. When quizzed by the women, he had to sheepishly admit that there was no Shakti in his legs. Admitting handsomely his defeat, he presented a distinctive headgear to the lady who had defeated him. Kashmiri Panditanis to this day wear the Taranga on their marriage day to commemorate the event.

It is interesting to see that India would have continued in this mistaken view if Kashmir Shaivism had not intervened. It is astounding to see how Shaivism transformed the thinking of Ramakrishna Paramhamsa.

In the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna by

Mahendra Nath Gupta, he summarizes his whole philosophy in the following aphorisms:

- God himself has become all this. God is the spirit of the universe.
- The universe is the body of God.
- When God is real, how can the universe be unreal or imaginary?
- When Sankara says that the world is unreal, he does not mean that it is non-existent or imaginary. He means it is transitory or changeable.
- Self-realization does not imply that we are less and we have to become something more. Shaivism believes that we are already what we had to be. All that is required is for us to recognize who we are.
- The universe progresses through alternate cycles of involution and evolution. First, God involves himself in matter. Matter then evolves into God.

The history of India and the world was rewritten as a result of these aphorisms.

Logical consequences of the aphorisms

a) It followed from these aphorisms that India had to struggle to be materialistically progressive. This led inexorably to Vivekananda and Nehru. Grihastha ashrama became the kingpin of existence, as the householder supported the *brahmachari*, the *vanaprastha* and the renunciate. Most of the rishis of Kashmir lived in their families and followed the advice of the Isa Upanishad to *tena tyekhtena bunjithah* (enjoy by renouncing).

b) India had to struggle in order to be free from foreign rule. This led to freedom of India and the remaining world from colonial regimes, end of apartheid and slavery, in ever-widening circles. This path led to Gandhi, Mandela and Obama.

c) Science was forced to go beyond its self-imposed limitations and move into quantum mechanics and then beyond quantum mechanics too. This led to Einstein, Schrodinger, Bohm, Capra and Ken Wilbur, and through them to the Theory of Everything.

d) Religion was compelled to enter the realm where science and spirituality draw closer to each other in a congruence of thinking. This has led to the gradual, unobtrusive abolition of religions as we have traditionally known them and to the emergence of a Science of Consciousness in thinkers like Sri Aurobindo, Swami Lakshmanjoo, Sathya Sai Baba, Teilhard de Chardin, Jiddu Krishnamurty, Sogyal Rimpoche, the Dalai Lama, Deepak Chopra, Robin Sharma, Ervin Laszlo and a host of others.

If we have to understand the deeper roots of Kashmiri identity, with its Sufism, rishi cult, trika philosophy, secularism, tolerance and whatever is referred to in the whole as Kashmiriyat, it must be seen in Kashmir Shaivism. Its superstructure stands on the foundation stone laid by Abhinavagupta, who is now being increasingly recognized as the greatest mind in the history of man. It is the science of the future, it is the philosophy of the future, it is the religion of the future.

If the above analysis is correct, the traumatic exoduses to which the Kashmiri Pandits have been subjected again and again are not errors in the divine dispensation. These are an integral part of the divine plan to disperse the Kashmiri Pandits to every nook and corner of the world, in order to spread the principles of Kashmir Shaivism.

Lest I be misconstrued, I hasten to add that this does not mean that our struggle to return to the Kashmir valley shall be given up. No! The material and the spiritual, the secular and the religious, the political and holistic struggles have to be simultaneously waged hand in hand, for ever and ever.

That, ladies and gentlemen, is the divinely ordained mission of the Kashmiri Pandit diaspora.

[Paper presented by the author at the seminar organised by the ICCR at IIC Annexe New Delhi on August 12, 2013. The other two panellists were Dr. Kapila Vatsayan and Mr. Vivek Katju.]

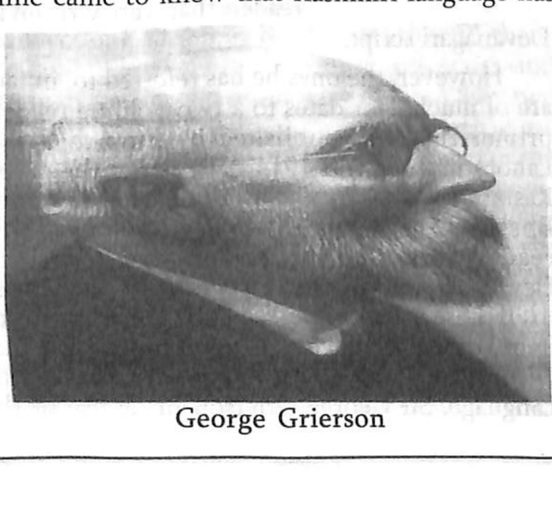
DISCOVERY OF THE FIRST KASHMIRI READER IN DEVANAGRI SCRIPT

– An Account of Circumstances Accompanying its Discovery -

S.N. Pandita

During the tumultuous years (90's) of our exile from Kashmir, issues concerning preservation and promotion of Kashmiri language were common place discussions among the community scholars and academics in Delhi. One often heard them in brain-storming public discourses and private conversations. Mostly these interactions meandered around issues related to script and literature of the language. Mostly debates but sometimes the controversy on the use of *Sarada*, *Devanagri* and *Nastaliq* scripts dominated these interactions. Least on the agenda, however, was the history of the works written in Kashmiri language.

It was 1994. One autumn afternoon I was cozying on the main balcony of my rented flat in Vasant Kunj, New Delhi. Sitting there, I was leisurely going through the collection of my grandfather's letters and documents and a letter dated July 21, 1912 written by George Grierson from Camberley, Surrey, UK to my grandfather (Nityanand Shastri) fell into my hands. It was a short letter, the initial lines of which read: "*I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 15th June and for copy of the Kashmiri Bhasha Pratham Pustaka which you have been kind as to send me. The latter I have found very interesting and instructive*". It was from this letter I for the first time came to know that Kashmiri language has had a reader as early as in 1912. There was, however, no mention as to the author of the work, nor anything about the publisher or the date of the work.



George Grierson



Pandit Nityanand Shastri

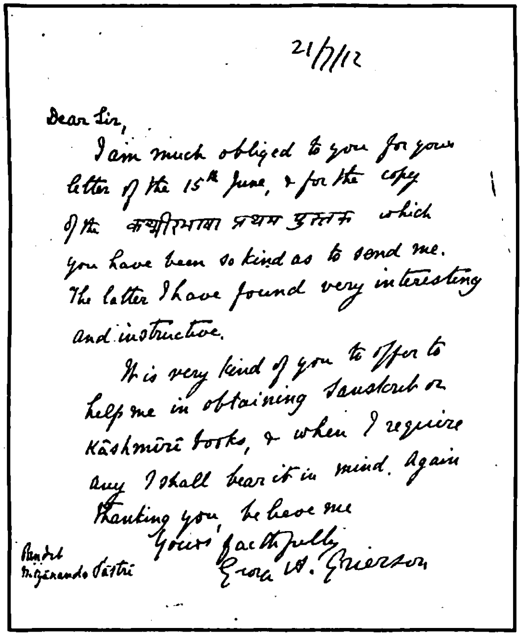
Having read the important fact from Grierson's letter, I shared the curiosity to know more about the history of Kashmiri language readers and primers from many people of scholarly bent and those who had interest in the language. Mostly, my queries remained on the fringes of any definite answer as to the earliest reader or primer published. In general they talked of some primer or a reader that appeared sometime in the late 20's of the last century. While they attested to its being the first ever written in the *Devanagri* script, none recalled its title. And each time I shared with them that there was one much older than they referred to, it evoked no comment. Perhaps they were never comfortable to revisit the history of Kashmiri language readers or primers.

Scholarly knowledge of the time had etched a public perception that first *Devanagari* reader of Kashmiri language had appeared only in the late 20's of the century. To keep things as they stood, my own weak interests in Kashmiri language

helped to maintain the perpetuity of the notion. I had opportunities to visit and work at the British Library, Bodleian Library, Leeds University, De-Montford University, Birmingham University Library & Museum, Luton Museum & Library, British Museum and the India House Library.

It was during one such visit in 2005 that I chanced to access the select annotated bibliography of manuscripts, books and articles together with a survey of Kashmir's history, language and literature compiled by the eminent Dogra scholar Ramesh Chander Dogra. The distinguished scholar worked sometime as the Principal Assistant Librarian and Head of the South Asian Division in the School of Oriental & African Studies at the University of London.

It was from Dogra's work that I located the authorship of *Kashmiri Bhasha Dutiya Pustaka* to my grandfather. Further research revealed that it was second book for learning Kashmiri and written in *Devanagri* script. The work was published by Empire Press, Lahore in 1914. This discovery made it certain that the *Kashmiri Bhasha Pratham Pustaka* referred to by Grierson in his letter dated July 21, 1912 to my grandfather was the first volume of the Reader authored by my grandfather.



21/7/12

Dear Sir,

I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 15th June, & for the copy of the काश्मीरिभाषा प्रथम पुस्तक which you have been so kind as to send me. The latter I have found very interesting and instructive.

It is very kind of you to offer to help me in obtaining Sanskrit or Kashmiri books, & when I require any I shall bear it in mind. Again thanking you, be leave me

Yours faithfully
George A. Grierson

Pandit
Nityananda Sastri

From then onwards, there was no doubt in my mind that my grandfather's Kashmiri Reader in *Devanagri* script predated by more than a decade and half the one that was generally believed to be the earliest written in that script. But was there an older one began lurking as a question in my mind. This propelled me to dig further into Dogra's voluminous work. And what tumbled out were still older Kashmiri Readers which, however, were all written in *Nastaliq* script generally referred to as Persian. These included *Gatjaruk Gud, Kashmarah Parnuk ta Lekhnuk Qaidah* and *Gadnich Kashir Kitab*. *Gatjaruk Gud* was published by Matbuah Riyaz Hind, Amritsar in 1892. *Kashmarah Parnuk ta Lekhnuk Qaidah* authored by Shihab –al- Din was also published by Matbuah Riyaz Hind in the same year. Hasan ibn Ali Nawpuri's *Gadnich Kashir Kitab* was published by Chashmah-i- Noor Publishers, Amritsar in 1901.

As my own work was not directly connected to the Kashmiri language, new information gained about the early Kashmiri language Readers remained in abeyance. Between 2005 and 2008 the general scholastic perception continued to believe that first Kashmiri Reader in *Devanagari* script came only in late 1920s. This belief gained final legitimacy when the eminent Kashmiri scholar Professor. C. L. Sapru wrote an article titled *Preserving Our Mother Tongue in Diaspora* in the January 2009 issue of the community journal *NAAD* published by All India Kashmiri Samaj, New Delhi. With the background information I had about the Kashmiri Readers, I wrote the following letter to the Editor of NAAD on February 10, 2009 in response to Professor Sapru's article:-

"This bears reference to the above cited article published in the January 09 issue of the NAAD. The learned author has referred to the series of 'first' Kashmiri primers and readers that were written in Devanagari script.

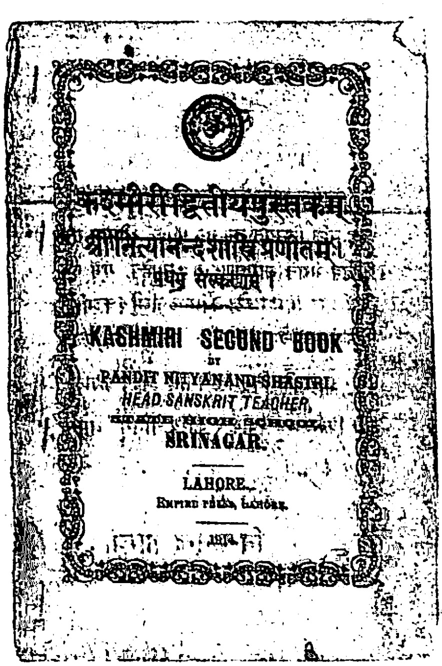
"However, the ones he has referred to, in fact are of much later dates to a two-volume reader/primer that was published by Empire Press, Lahore in 1912 and 1914 A.D. under the titles: Kashmiri Bhasha Pratham Pustaka and Kashmiri Bhasha Dutiya Pustaka. Very obviously this reader/primer of the Kashmiri language in Devanagri script is nearly a decade and half older to all those primers referred to by Professor Sapru in his article. It may be pertinent to mention that while preparing Dictionary of the Kashmiri Language, Sir George Grierson made use of the

said Kashmiri Reader and recorded to have found it "instructive".

"Given the antiquity of the Kashmiri language and preference of the Kashmiri Pandits to use Devanagari script for their mother-tongue, particularly, during the last century and half, it may be more probable that a Devanagari primer/ reader even prior to 1912 A.D may have existed. After all it is unthinkable that very eminent Kashmiri Pandit scholars of the Kashmiri language of that age would have been without a standard guide-book or a reader booklet for use of writing in Kashmiri. The fact may be that such a primer or a reader may be buried under the dust of Time only awaiting its discovery! This, therefore, is a matter of research and future investigation.

"It may also be of interest to know that among the other older primers and readers of the Kashmiri language written in Persian script, the following are noteworthy:

Gatjaruk Gud, published in 1892 A.D., Gadneich Kashir Kitab, published in 1901A.D. and Kashmarah Parnuk tah Lekhnuk Qaidah in 1892 A.D. All these three readers were published from Amritsar."



The letter was never published in NAAD. Why? I do not know.

However, what I knew then and beyond any doubt was that my grandfather's two-volume Kashmiri Reader was the 'till-then-known' oldest one in the *Devanagari* script and those in the Persian script were older to it by two decades. This discovery, however, infused in me more keen desire to actually locate a copy of my grandfather's Kashmiri Reader. Of its first volume, I knew that it would be safe in Grierson's collection in U.K. But where was a copy of the second volume to be located? Was it there, or not? Would it be that it was lost in anonymity. These questions bothered my mind and no clues were forthcoming to prove its provenance.

But given my keen interest and desire to track my grandfather's scholastic journey I persisted with hope. But it was like groping in the dark with no sign posts to guide my modest journey. No one seemed to revisit this history. Scholars and academics of Kashmiri language remained busy standardizing *Devanagri* script for the language. No one seemed to spare any effort to search any earlier *Devanagri* Primer or Reader that could have enabled them to learn and understand as to how the alphabet had been put to use for writing Kashmiri a century ago if not earlier.

Logic suggested as to how could it be that very eminent Kashmiri Pandit scholars of earlier times would have been without a standard *Devanagri* guide-book or a reader for use of writing Kashmiri. Instead, language experts continued experimenting with new recipes as if no previous scheme ever existed.

Years rolled by. And then the unbelievable happened in 2011!

It was November 14, 2011 to be precise. On that day I was at Asian Hospital, Faridabad, having come there to be with a friend whose wife was undergoing surgery. Waiting there in the hospital lobby and sharing the anxiety of my friend, my mobile phone rang a little before noon. It was a call from my elder brother (a cousin) Commodore Lalit Shanker to convey that the eminent Kashmiri scholar Professor. T.N. Ganjoo desired to speak to me in connection with his forthcoming TV talk on Srinagar Doordarshan regarding Swami Vivekananda's visit to Kashmir in 1897-98.

Just after I had finished speaking to my cousin, I rang up Professor Ganjoo from the hospital itself. I indicated the purpose of my call to Professor Ganjoo and provided him the details he sought from me. Professor Ganjoo was glad with the details I gave him. Throughout the conversation, he was profusely affectionate and warm. Apart from the purpose of our talk, the conversation was a journey down the memory lane; we talked about

समर्पण

कश्मीर भाषा-ईन्द् यि द्युत् पुस्तक छुस् ब्वह चडि विनयत नम्रताय-पूर्वक श्रीमान् यम साहिब भगत नारायणदास साहिब एस् ए० [जुडीशल मिम्बर स्टेट कौंसिल जम्मु व कश्मीर] संज़ि सेवाय वेश समर्पण करान्। म्यं छ्वह् दृह् आशाज़ि तिम् ति पनानि बन्य कृपालुताय किनि यथ् स्वीकार करिथ् मेनिस् श्रमस् सफार्थ करन्॥

निवेदको

नित्यानन्द शास्त्री।

ॐ

पाठ १

*** उपदेश ***

मथ् छनि कामि हुन्दिस् आरम्भस् वेश गछि मनशव तमिस् भगवान संन्दु स्मरण् करुन्। यमि सोम्य् जगत् पाद कुरु। ब्यय युस् सारिनुय् लुकन हन्दिस् हृदयस् मंज़ ब्हरिथ् छुह्। तमि सन्दिय् स्वरन किनि छिह् सारिय् विघ्न् दूर गछान्। यिथ कनि आकाशस् प्यठ वावस् सन्मुस् मेघ् ब्हरान् छिन। तिथय् कनि छिन भगवान सान्दिस् नावस् शोष्ठ कन्य विघ्न् दरान्। यमि संज़ि प्रेरणाय किनि

our old family ties and times and life our families had shared in good old days. It was at this point that Professor Ganjoo made a mention of our grandfather's great learning and humane qualities. And then came the astounding revelation; something that appeared to be of a divine design. "*Long time ago when I was a small boy and had come down to your home, Pandit Nityanand Ji gave me the Kashmiri Reader he had written and urged me to make use of it to learn writing Kashmiri. It is more than seven decades that I have had his blessed book in my personal library. The well-preserved small book is a precious relic of his blessings and token of remembrance of that noble soul*".

On hearing these words I was touched and moved by his generous kindness and much more delighted to know that the little book, I knew of but would not know if it had survived the vagaries of time, was there and perhaps now within my reach to physically see it or possess its copy. Composing myself from the euphoria it had caused me, I gathered courage to request Professor Ganjoo that I would be glad if he could kindly give a photo- Xerox copy of the little book. Asking him for the original book was out of question and not even moral by any consideration. Professor Ganjoo, before he may have batted his eye, readily agreed to my request.

I was delighted that at last I had located the existence of the first Kashmiri language Reader in *Devanagri* script. In more than one way it was a historical book.

Sometime in January 2013, Lalit visited Professor T.N. Ganjoo at his Delhi home. There he collected the Kashmiri Reader. Professor Ganjoo was generous enough to give the original book instead its Xerox copy. Having taken the possession of the Kashmiri Reader, Lalit informed me about the same. Following this news, I journeyed in the deep recesses of my mind recalling the legend of Siva revealing the *Siva Sutra* to Vasugupta in a dream and also the account that claimed Siva directing him to a particular rock in Kashmir that had the *Sutra* inscribed on it.

The myriad of my thoughts did not stop there. I recalled how Georg Buhler had traced the manuscript of Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* with the old Pandit Kesavram who though had shown him the manuscript but never allowed to touch it. Even as the tornado of my thoughts remained unabated, I recalled how Aurel Stein had finally obtained the possession of the manuscript of the *Rajatarangini* from the descendents of Pandit Kesavram after Pandit Suraj Koul, the then Member of the Maharaja's Royal Council had exercised his salutary influence on the owners. While these thoughts kept on inundating my mind, I felt that the thread of these stories ran so similar to my own journey and circumstances that had led to obtain our grandfather's pioneering work.

From then onwards it was a matter of wait before I would actually take the book in my hand. Sometime in February 2013, Lalit handed over the Kashmiri Reader to me. Taking the small book in my hands, I thanked him saying: "*You are its actual discoverer;I only indicated its provenance*".

Following the book coming into my hands, I called on Professor Ganjoo to thank him for the precious gift and his enormous generosity. In this conversation too Professor Ganjoo was kind and affectionate beyond words. Summing up the entire journey of our grandfather's book, the respected and eminent scholar sealed it with the following words: "*In the great divine design I was to be its custodian for more than seven decades. God has now sent it to the worthy recipient*".

With the century old Reader now discovered, the pursuit to discover a still-older Kashmiri Reader in *Devanagri* script must continue. It is possible that such a one may be buried under the dust of Time and awaiting discovery! After-all there is no last word in research. ■

IN SEARCH OF PEACE: A VISIT ACROSS LOC – II

Prof. Omkar N. Kaul

[The second and the concluding part of Prof. Koul's article which appeared in our September 13 issue, is being published hereunder. We look forward to our readers' comments – ANKS]

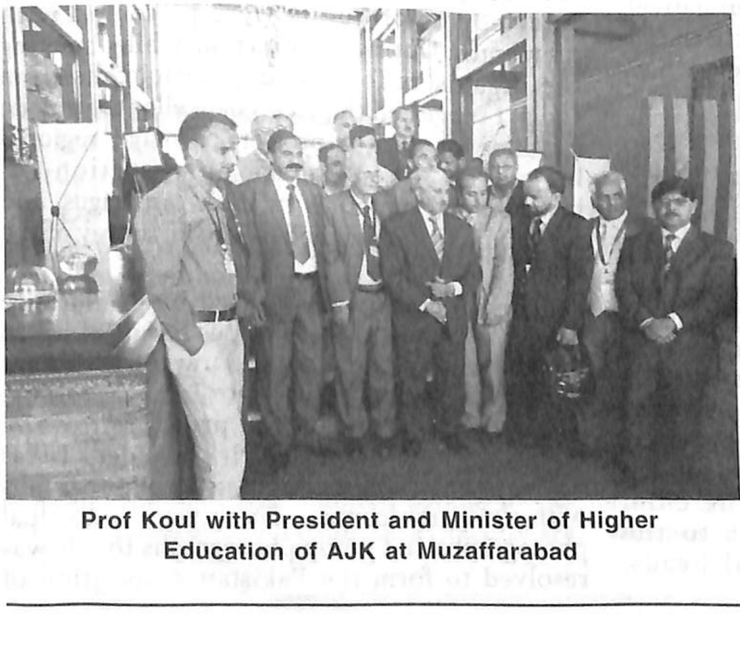


On the 15th morning at breakfast, I met Prof Paul Kiparsky after a long time. He is active in his research and teaching in linguistics at Stanford. We exchanged notes on the current linguistic research related to Indian languages. He had read some papers related to Kashmiri co-authored by Peter Hook and me and wanted to know about the publication of our joint volume on Kashmiri. In his keynote address entitled "Modelling Syntactic Drift: Grammatical Case and Agreement in Indo-Iranian" delivered after the inauguration of the conference, he had referred to one of our papers.

The Inaugural function of the conference was held in a huge hall in the hotel itself. The conference was inaugurated by the President of AJK, Sardar Mohammad Yaqoob Khan, who is the chancellor of the University. He delivered his address in Pahari, his mother tongue. He spoke in favour of the maintenance and preservation of one's mother tongue. An English translation of his speech was circulated but he deviated from it and I could understand about 80% of his speech. His Pahari appeared close to Dogri, and Punchi. Other speeches were made in English and Urdu. The minister of Higher Education, a hardcore politician was the only one who made a political reference to Kashmir. The president wanted to have tea with all the foreigners. I was sitting next to him and I complimented him for making a speech in Pahari. I made a strong plea to him that the government should introduce Pahari and other local languages in the elementary education. He said he would like it to happen.



Prof Koul with the President of AJK



Prof Koul with President and Minister of Higher Education of AJK at Muzaffarabad

The Inaugural function was followed by the keynote address by Prof Paul Kiparsky. All of us moved to the University Campus for lunch and academic sessions which continued up to 6: 30 pm. There were four parallel sessions. I had to chair one of them. The papers were mostly related to Pakistani English, English Language Teaching, Socio-linguistic surveys and structures of some local languages. There was a healthy

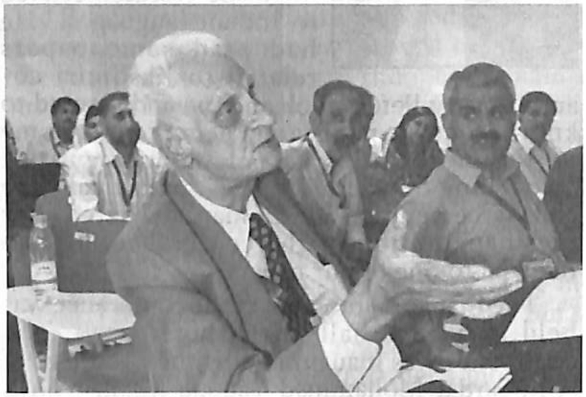
discussion on the papers presented. The quality of most of the papers presented by senior scholars was good but others needed improvements. As most of the participants and paper presenters were from the English departments of Universities and colleges, their presentation in English was good.

A cultural programme and dinner was organised at the lawns of Neelam Valley Hotel. The cultural programme provided the glimpses of the social life, dresses, songs, dances and skits related to people belonging to different communities, social groups and regions. A typical gentleman was shown dressed in Kashmiri *pheran* holding a *kangri*, others were shown dressed in their regional attires. Some skits and rituals were enacted. People belonging to other communities like Hindus, Christians, Budhists and Sikhs were shown in their typical traditional attire. There were songs from different regions. Punjabi songs spontaneously attracted volunteers from the audience to dance to the tune.

I met Prof Tariq Rehman and his wife at dinner. I have known Prof Rehman, a well-known socio-linguist for quite some time now. His plenary lecture entitled "Questioning Myths about Urdu: The Constructions of Language and Political Identities in British India and Implications for Peace in the Present times" was scheduled at 9 am the next day. He presented the linguistic profile of Pakistan. It was interesting to note that Urdu is spoken natively only by about 7% of population in Pakistan. The language policy and its implementation have several flaws. Prof Rehman has written extensively on the subject.

There were parallel sessions for the presentation of papers till 630 pm. Then we had to move to the Pearl Continental Hotel for a special video conference from abroad, followed by my plenary lecture, valedictory function of the seminar and conference dinner. The video presentation was on the activities of the Foundation of Endangered Languages based in Australia by its president. There were many people present in the conference hall including the vice-chancellor and top official of the university, top bureaucrats like the chief secretary of the state, secretaries to the government, various departmental heads, cultural attaché of the American Embassy in Islamabad.

The subject of my plenary lecture, "What Endangers Languages in a Multilingual Situation" was directly related to the theme of the conference. I made a power-point presentation for 30 minutes. The lecture was followed by questions and good discussion. It was pointed out that as far as the endangerment of minor languages goes, the situation in Pakistan is not different from that in India and other neighbouring countries. It is important to take up necessary preventive measures to arrest the delicate and alarming situation.



Prof Koul participating in the discussion

My lecture was followed by the concluding session chaired by the Chief Secretary. All foreign participants of the conference and selected senior guests were presented with mementos. During this function, while thanking the organisers for inviting participants from India, I suggested the vice-chancellor to provide facilities for starting projects on major regional languages like Pahari, preparation of instructional materials in these languages, and for conducting a detailed linguistic survey of the region.

The function was followed by Conference dinner arranged in the spacious beautiful lawns of the hotel overlooking the town with bright lights and scenic beauty late in the evening. There were requests for press, radio and television interviews, which I avoided. I was happy to entertain the requests for photographs with the participants. There were individual photographs and group photographs too. It was resolved to form the Pakistan Association of

Linguists. Most of the participants attending the conference became its members.

While participating in different sessions of the conference, discussions with individuals and in social gatherings like cultural programmes, dinners, outings there was an opportunity to have informal discussions regarding the academic and other socio-cultural and political situation. One can make some tentative observations as under:

1. English is the preferred language of education. Private English medium schools attract more students than the government schools.

2. At the social level, Punjabi, Siraiki, Multani, Hindko, Pashto and Sindhi speaking communities use their languages in their families, market place and in social interaction. There is a continuous demand for providing facilities for the academic activities, development of these languages and their use in different domains such as education, administration and mass media. Various non-governmental organisations are making efforts in this regard.

3. Urdu being the official language of the country is used in formal domains at the state and national level. Linguistic minorities settled in different states have switched over to the major regional languages for day-to-day communication in all social domains. Tahir Iqbal, a Punjabi mother-tongue speaker from Karachi, said older generation of Punjabis settled in Karachi do speak Punjabi within their community but cannot read and write in this language. Their younger generation does not speak it or are not comfortable with it. I talked with him in Punjabi and he would switch over to Urdu and English very frequently.

4. On enquiring about the security situation in Swat with a participant from Swat, who has got his higher education in the UK, said the entire Swat region is under the influence of Taliban. They roam around with their weapons everywhere and are friendly as long as their dictate is followed in the area. The government does not have full control over the situation.

5. I was very anxious to know about the economic status of the common people in the state. The pay scales of the university faculty are almost at par with the pay scales in India. On enquiring about the economic status of the common people, an official of the university who was accompanying us to Pir Chinnasi made an interesting statement, "Here people are rich but the government is poor." Explaining this further he said, at least one person of every family works in the Gulf countries and sends money to his family regularly." People do exhibit modern gadgets including expensive cell phones, and there are many Japanese cars on the road.

It was good to interact with my previous acquaintances like Mohsin Shakil, Khwaja Ahmad and others I met in the conference like Raja Nasim Akhtar, Ayesha Sohail, Nayab Sami, Dure-E-Nab, Ruxana Said, Mir Adnan Rehman, Zafeer Hussain Kiani, Hamidullah Pathan, Abdul Qadir Khan, Uzma Anjum, Raayna Batool Malick, Rabia Kiani, Mahwish Khan, Shahida Khalique, Humaira Hamid. Sara Akbar etc., during the conference. I found most of the people especially women quite affectionate and emotional. When I met Nayab Sami second time, she said, "I'm very much worried about you." I asked surprisingly, "Why?" She said, "I don't know. I hope you are comfortable over here." Nayab Sami and her close friend Dur-E-Nab took special care of me during the conference dinner served at the table shared with the VIPs. They were very affectionate, so where others who wanted to have photographs with me after the dinner.



Prof Koul with some participants in the Conference

Next morning at breakfast I met Rashid Rauf Banday, General Manager of Pearl Continental Hotel. He is a Kashmiri by birth but his family has moved from Amritsar to Pakistan at the time

of partition. He was born and brought up in Pakistan and has done his hotel management from abroad. He said his family still maintains relations with people in Kashmir and he has visited Srinagar. Elders in his family do speak Kashmiri. I met two other Kashmiri speaking staff members working in the hotel. I interacted with the cultural attaché of the US Embassy. He said there are funds available under Track 2 for organising people to people contact programmes between India and Pakistan.

We checked out from the hotel at 10 am and went to the University to say bye to the organisers before leaving for Islamabad. An official of the University accompanied us. We were escorted by the security vehicle up to the border of AJK. On our way back we stopped at Murre to have lunch at a hotel. We reached Islamabad at about 4 pm. Ruxana Said who works at Taxila Institute of Asian Civilisation, Quid-A-Azam University, Islamabad had asked us to meet her in Islamabad on our way back. We called her and she insisted that she and her husband would like to take us out for dinner. She said before dinner she can help us in shopping too.

After checking in the University Guest House and resting for a while, three of us left for Karachi Market in the town. Ruxana and her husband Riaz Khan met us in the market. Riaz has given up his job in army and has joined a company. He is active in politics and social work. He is member and spokesperson of United Kashmir People's National Party and Chairman of Jammu & Kashmir Socio-Political Reconciliation & Reconstruction. Karachi Market is just like Sarojini Nagar market in Delhi where middle class people shop. Shops are mostly owned and run by Afghanis and people from Karachi. We got a good bargain. Ruxana and Riaz took us to their home where we met their 6-year old daughter Asha. She was a little shy in the beginning and told us she is learning Chinese in school. It was nice to know that Ruxana is an artist and makes paintings. I liked one of her paintings and told her if she can give me a photograph of it, I can use it on the title page of Vaakh which I edit. She was very generous and said in that case she can present the original painting to me. And she did.

The Khans took us for dinner to Said Pur, a hub of restaurants, museum and galleries about 10 kilometers from Islamabad. Riaz said that there is an old Hindu temple too nearby. It was around 930 pm by the time we reached there. The temple was locked at that time. We saw marble stones at the staircase with inscriptions in Urdu and Devanagari mentioning the names of the persons who have donated money to the temple. On one stone the amount of donation was mentioned "Rs 10". That showed that the temple is really very old.

We went to *Des Pardes* restaurant, laid up in a Balouchi style in open with live music. We were escorted to the table surrounded by three cushioned cots with round pillows for sitting. Riaz is vegetarian. Two of us ordered vegetarian dishes, and the rest non-vegetarian. It took them more than 45 minutes to serve food, but it was delicious. A feedback form was brought along with a small bouquet of flowers. It was passed on to Asha for comments. Against the service column, Asha wrote 'bad'. All of us laughed.

Next morning, I saw a smart young man checking email in the lounge of the guest house. I waited for a while to take my turn. He knew that I'm from India and have returned from Muzaffarabad after attending the conference. He introduced himself and said that he has completed his MBBS from a medical college in Karachi and is planning to go abroad for higher studies in medicine. He asked me, "Why don't India and Pakistan solve the Kashmir problem once for all?" I responded, "Do you have an idea how it can be solved?" He provided an immediate solution, "It's simple. Let India keep the part it is administering, and Pakistan theirs. LOC can become international border with special relaxation to be given to the people of Jammu and Kashmiri to visit each other." I kept on thinking about a simple solution to a complex problem coming from a young mind.

We left for the airport at 9 am to catch the flight to Lahore and the connecting flight to Delhi. The PIA flight coming from Kabul was delayed by an hour but we reached Lahore in time to catch the flight to Delhi at 2.30 pm.

[Prof. Koul is a renowned linguist, a scholar of Kashmiri language and literature, and is currently the Editor of AIKS's reputed quarterly magazine, Vaakh (in Devnagri)]

WHEN I RECOLLECT

T.N.Dhar 'Kundan'



Kashmir is known as 'Reshi –Vaer', the abode of sages. The other day I thought that let me recollect who the sages were whom I have seen or known personally. The earliest memory that I had was of Kasha Kak of Manigam. Our entire family, along with some near relatives, was invited by a family living near Manigam. After we had our lunch we went to see the sage who was sitting on the bank of the river Sindh. I faintly remember that he had predicted that a son would be born to my cousin, which eventually came true. I also remember that he gave me some sugar candy saying that it would help me get good education. The next thing I remember is that there was another sage of the same name who was called Kasha Malla. He lived in the first floor of one of the two houses that the family had near second bridge, facing each other. Once, one of the two houses caught fire. His disciples came running to rescue the family and their belongings. They implored the sage to leave his room but he would not listen. After the fire was extinguished, everybody was surprised to see that the house where the sage had his room remained unscathed while the top floor of the other houses gutted, although the two houses were connected by a balcony-bridge.

Another sage whom I have seen in my childhood was one Rehman Saeb. My maternal uncle used to go to him often. He took me and his son there with him a couple of times. The sage lived near Shalimar Bagh. He used to move and rotate his head vehemently in extreme ecstasy and bless all those present. He was a Sufi engaged in 'Zikra' as I came to know later. I have also seen lady sages, Mathra Devi and Sati Ded and some other sages like Prithvinath, Grata Bab, Nanda Bab and others. But there was one sage at Anantnag whom I will never forget. His name though I have forgotten. I had appeared for my matriculation examination and was waiting for my result when a known family in Anantnag asked my father to send me there for a few days for rest and recreation. I went there and was well received and well taken care of by the family. I visited all the beautiful places in and around the township as also the holy spring and the temple. One day I saw a small crowd entering into a house. On enquiry I came to know that a sage lived there and these people would call on him for spiritual satisfaction. I too entered the house and bowed before the sage. Next day I went again to him. After the meeting was over and the people left, he asked me to stay back. I obeyed. He prepared some tea and gave me a little in a cup to sip. I did so. Then he asked me about my parents, family and studies. He dissuaded me from any idea of taking to *sanyas* (giving up family life) should anyone ever suggest that. He advised me to devote my entire time to my studies and serve my elders sincerely and dutifully. This was a lesson for me for my life time.

I recollect once Swami Laxman Joo had visited our house and I had observed a glistening radiance on his forehead. In fact when my elder brother got married, we came to know that his brother-in-law was a disciple of Swami ji. So through him a request was made to him to pay us a visit, which he graciously agreed and we had the good luck of welcoming him in our house in Srinagar. I had my education and early life in Kashmir and thereafter I left the place and joined central services for my livelihood. While in Kashmir I met two non-Kashmiri saints too, one at Tula Mula and the other at Nishat garden. The former was young but highly elevated spiritually. This I could gauge from his voluntary utterances. The latter was sitting under a tree when some of my friends and I approached him while we were on a picnic. He advised us to take care of our possessions, books, equipment, clothes *et al* very carefully and kindly. During a pilgrimage to Tula Mula I had the privilege of the company of Swami Trilokinath Dutt in the boat that carried us back to Srinagar. On this trip he explained to me the significance of the seed syllable 'OM'.

There were many hidden saints in Kashmir.

One such exalted soul was working as a cook in our area. His employer was a patient of my father's and he would often come to our clinic to take medicine for him. I used to respect him very much knowing as I did his spiritual level. My father was not aware of that and, therefore, he once asked me the reason for giving him out of the ordinary respect. I promised him that I would demonstrate his heights to him one day. The day came when my father and I were alone in the clinic and this saint came to take medicine for his master. I asked him whether he had some time to spare. He replied in affirmative. I requested him to explain the meaning of a *shloka* from Bhagavad Gita, which briefly says that one cannot conceive of a thing that does not exist and what one conceives must necessarily exist. He obliged us and started explaining the purport of this verse. After three hours he realized that it was late for him to return and promised that he would resume the explanation some other time. Such was the depth of his knowledge gained mainly from his spiritual experience.

The last fifteen years of my service career were very rewarding. I was involved with certain institutions and colleges that imparted education in traditional Sanskrit. During this period I was assigned the task of planning the establishment of the Foundation for Vedic Studies. Once this was accomplished I was privileged to work in that institution at Delhi till it was relocated at Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh. During this decade and a half I had the good fortune of meeting, knowing and interacting with scores of scholars in Vedas, different schools of Philosophy, Sanskrit studies and the scriptures. Many of them were no less than sages and saints. I had the great honour and fortune of meeting Shankaracharyas of all the Maths, Dwarka, Kanchi, Shringeri and Puri. The most satisfying was a meeting with Paramaacharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham and a week's proximity with Shankaracharya of Shringeri at Mysore. As ordained by him I translated a book 'Dialogue with the Guru' published by them from English to Hindi and His Holiness wrote the foreword to the book himself.

I had the good fortune of meeting Acharya Pattabhiram Shastri, who was a sage in his own right. His scholarship coupled with a simple modest living made him a saint of a class apart. I had also the privilege of meeting a Jain monk, Vidyadhar Ji Maharaj, of Digambar order. A mere sitting in proximity of this great soul was satisfying but then the words that came out from his mouth were simply nectar to the ears and soothing to the soul. I have seen and heard Satya Sai Baba. I have read about Sri Rama Krishna Param Hamsa, Swami Vivekananda, Shri Raman Maharishi, Shri Aurobindo, Shri Sivananda and many other saints. Their teachings have confirmed my firm belief that the Truth is one and it can be explained in different ways, attained by different means and interpreted in multiple ways depending upon which aspect of the truth you like to lay emphasis on. This again depends upon a seeker, his capacity and level of understanding as also what fascinates him according to his acumen and tastes.

There is one more saint that I would like to mention here, Bhagavaan Gopinath ji. I had never seen him, met him or heard about him. I actually came to know him through some of his disciples and devotees. Then I had the occasion to read about him, know about him and his message from those who had known him from close quarters. Thereafter he showered his grace on me. I was ordained to write his biography and many more articles on his life and teachings. He held my hand and made me write on a variety of spiritual topics. The experience was unique, satisfying and rewarding.

I have been a student of literature. The little that I have been able to read in various languages that I know, has confirmed my belief that a writer or a poet whose writings have an under- current of spirituality produces literature of a high order and of universal and lasting value for the mankind. The spirituality makes their creative writings relevant for all times. After all human beings have spirituality as an important facet of their existence and giving expression to this aspect in arts and literature makes the artist immortal. This is so because the mundane and physical aspects are momentary and undergo changes but spiritual aspects are perennial and changeless. My interaction with various saints and savants and my study of the spiritual literature has definitely influenced my own writings both in prose and poetry over the years. ■

CHINMAYA MISSION MOVEMENT - II

C L Sadhu

[This is the second and the concluding part of the article on Chinmaya Mission Movement; the first part appeared in our September 13 issue. We hope readers have found it of interest – ANKS]



The land / site and property in the Western Himalayan peaks at Sidhbari was chosen by Guru Dev himself in late 70's as a place for retirement for himself and the devotees. In 80's he would spend several months each year in Sidhbari guiding Sadhna Camps. After his physical disappearance attaining Nirvana on Aug 4, 1993 at San Diego, California (U.S.A), his body was embalmed in a Lotus position and carried in a casket for final destination at Sidhbari where a grand Samadhi stands sacred and is a place of worship.



Param Pujya Gurudev's Samadhi

Prayers are held at the Samadhi both in the morning and evening by all students, devotees and mission inmates. The calm, tranquil and disciplined atmosphere prevails at the Samadhi which faces beautiful mountainous landscape stimulating the meditators with the highest spiritual order.

A full-fledged library equipped with all scriptures and books on spiritual philosophy, authored by great sages and saints of the times, is located facing the majestic Ram Temple. The library which includes Audio / Video cassettes / CDRs on religious topics by H.H. Guru Dev and other senior Swamis and scholars, is located facing the Ram Temple. Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development (CHORD) with Goshala, a Vocational Centre, including medical unit, is housed separately at a distance of 2 furlongs, functioning under the Chinmaya Tapovan Trust.



Param Pujya Gurudev's Kutiya

The other Sandeepanys are located in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka where curricular scriptural instructions are given in regional languages. As Chinmaya Mission Retreats, other significant Sandeepanys are Chinmaya Sandeepany Ashram near Kolhapur surrounded by lush green fields. It has the tallest Ganesh statue in the world, 61 feet tall concrete idol on a 24 feet tall meditation hall. Chinmaya Sandeepany Chokkahalli near Kolar in Karnataka is surrounded by rocky mountains. Chinmaya Gardens near Coimbatore is located at the foothills of the western ghat. The Ashram has its own paddy fields, coconut groves, orchards, vegetable garden, goshala and a temple. Tapovan Kuti overlooking the River Ganga in Uttarkashi in the Himalayas is where Swami Chinmayananda's Guru Swami Tapovanam lived for many decades and Swami Chinmayananda's scriptural studies took place here. Krishnalaya in Piercy, California is in the midst of the magnificent and giant Redwood groves where Swami Chinmayananda's well-known video commentary on Bhagvad Geeta was recorded. Chinmaya Vibhooti, a grateful tribute to Pujya Guru Dev Swami Chinmayananda, a vision centre to keep his vision ever glowing and vibrant, a residential complex, international convention centre, a depiction of Pujya Guru Dev's life, work and teaching through modern interactive technology, shrines dedicated to Lord Ganesha and Lord Hanuman overstretched to nearly 55 acres of land surrounded by the beautiful Sahyadri mountain ranges is located at village Kolwan in Maharashtra, 2-hours from Mumbai and 45 minutes away from Pune.

The core of the Hindu religion is its philosophy of Vedanta, a science just like

physics, chemistry, biology etc. The principal forums through which Chinmaya Mission disseminates this man-making knowledge of Vedanta are:

- *Gyana Yagnas* : A week long series of public discourses conducted on a particular scripture throughout, with intervals.

- *Spiritual camps:* Minimum 7-10 days regular spiritual retreats organised by almost all centres in India and abroad periodically on scriptures like Upanishads, Bhagavad Geeta, Srimad Bhagvata or the Ramayana, group discussions, meditation sessions and cultural programmes.

- *Vedanta course:* This is a rigorous two and half years resident course in Vedanta for those who wish to become teachers for Chinmaya Mission. Those with a college degree are eligible and are selected on the basis of merit. The course is held at the Sandeepany's Vedanta Academics of Chinmaya Mission in Mumbai (English) and in Sidhbari (Hindi).

- *Dharma Sevak Course:* This is 1½ month residential course conducted by Chinmaya Mission Centre at Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu) at a picturesque resort under the Course Director Swami Vimlananda and provides full scriptural knowledge, in short duration, every year in June – July.

- *Chinmaya Lesson Course:* A correspondence course on the fundamentals of Vedanta. It comprises of 24 lessons and 12 questionnaires in English. Two lessons and one questionnaire are sent each month. The answer papers are then sent back for assessment and is designed in such a way so that it doesn't interfere with the official, social and domestic commitments of participants.

1.04 Senior Citizens Homes (Pitamaha Sadans)

Chinmaya Mission has eight Sr. Citizen's Homes in India. They are located in Allahabad (U.P), Kanpur (U.P), Rewa (M.P), Tamaraipakkam (Tamil Nadu), Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu), Ellayapalle (Andhra Pradesh), Kothapatnam (A.P) and Kolhapur (Maharashtra). These Homes provide affordable and comfortable accommodation, vegetarian food, books / TV and medical facilities. They organise many spiritual activities and provide an excellent ambience for spiritual unfoldment.

1.05 Temples & Shrines

Chinmaya Mission, not with an objective of traditional worshipping, but for discourses, celebration of festivals and the expression of music / arts as a form of worship to the Lord, has built many temples in India and abroad. These are located at Andhra Pradesh: Presiding deity – Lord Araneswara / Nava Graha Temple, Sri Anjaneya presiding deity Sri Anjaneya, all in A.P including Chinmaya Dhyana Nilayam : Presiding deity Lord Shiva at Hyderabad and Sri Vishveshwara Swamy Temple-presiding deity- Sri Vishveshwara Swamy at Trikoota. Sri Ram Temple Sidhbari with presiding deities Rama, Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman, Deenabandhu Temple Bangalore-presiding deity Lord Krishna including Omkareshwara temple Chokkahalli- presiding deity Lord Shiva and Lord Ganpati. Adi Sankara shrine_Veliyanad, Kerala, Tapovan shrine Uttarkashi.

In the U.S.A. which is home to around 1.5 million Indians, temples have been built by the mission in Orlando (Florida), Washington DC, Houston & Dallas (Texas), Chicago, San Jose & Los Angeles (California), Flint & Ann Arbor (Michigan). In Canada, one temple has been built at Toronto. Temples have been recently constructed at Durban (South Africa) with Lord Shiva as the presiding deity and at Sri Lanka with Lord Hanuman as presiding deity.

1.06 Chinmaya Mission offers schools and colleges with a difference. Chinmaya Vision Programme (CVP) which the mission has developed is to compliment the normal curriculum with value / culture based and patriotically oriented (details not within the scope of this write-up). Presently more than 75 Chinmaya Vidyalayas, most of them affiliated to the All India Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), or to their State Boards. These are located at Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka.

A co-educational Chinmaya international residential school located in serene surroundings, just outside Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu, admits children on merit both from India and abroad and is affiliated both to CBSE and the International Baccalaureate (Geneva) enabling children to qualify for colleges in India, the United States, Europe, Australia and elsewhere.

Six colleges are also set up by the mission at Kerala, one at Bangalore (Karnataka) and one Chinmaya Degree College of Sciences at Haridwar, Uttarakhand.

Rural village development projects, adult literacy programmes for illiterate village men and women, vocational centres and primary health

care centres are running at a number of centres in India benefitting thousands of poor rural villages and the inhabitants.

1.07 Research Programme

Chinmaya International Foundation (C.I.F), based in Kerala at Adi Sankara Nilayam, the maternal ancestral home of Adi Sankra and the place where the great spiritual master was born, is a cross cultural study and research centre where scholars from all over the world meet for the purpose of understanding, exchanging ideas, conducting research into Sanskrit texts, Indian Culture and comparative religion and philosophy for the promotion of international understanding and universal spirituality.

Chinmaya Institute of Management (CIM), an organ of the Chinmaya Institute of Higher Learning located in Bangalore Karnataka is functioning with an aim to integrate core values into the field of Management (CIM)'s courses and services, integrate this approach into standard management topics and deliberate on these in the form of workshops / Seminars & Conferences held periodically at CIM and at Chinmaya Mission Centres as well as abroad especially in California (U.S.A) for Senior & Middle Level Managers.

1.08 Chinmaya Mission has 245 centres in India and around the world. The centres organise and coordinate the spiritual, cultural and social service activities of the Mission in their areas. The centres have some or all of the facilities like auditorium, Satsang Hall, meditation room, conference room, museum, spiritual library and bookshop. Chinmaya Centre of World Understanding in New Delhi and the Chinmaya Heritage Centre at Chennai, for example, offer all of the facilities mentioned above.

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FROM PARADISE TO HELL

A young Kashmiri Pandit woman from the valley, presently in exile, Rakhee Dhar, braving the noon-time scorching heat of Gwalior (M.P.) along with her son, Bhavik, spotted and clicked by a *Nayi Duniya* photographer.



[Courtesy : *Nai Duniya*
Gwalior 29.09.2013

NAAD EDUCATION FOLIO

Compiled and composed by Vijay Kashkari



Advantages & Disadvantages of Distance Learning

Considered to be the poorer course than of regular college programmes, distance learning is a blessing for students who want to study further while continuing with jobs or who might not be able to attend a full-time course for various reasons. The most frequent questions from students, related to the confusion over the value of a distance learning programme are about its quality and job prospectus. The answer to this totally depend on the student. Some students can make the most out of a distance learning programme, but there are also others who are not comfortable with this pattern. Here we will discuss the pros and cons of distance learning/ distance education programmes which can helps you decide if you should go for it:

Disadvantages of Studying through Distance Learning:

There is no direct contact with faculty. Lack of personal interaction with teachers often affects the learning curve for some students. This is one major disadvantage of distance learning. Flipping through voluminous books with no mentor to guide you can be overwhelming for some students. Some distance learning programmes, especially online courses, require access to internet. Unless you are comfortable with this medium, you will find studying and interacting with your faculty online difficult. With no teacher reminding you of deadlines, asking for your assignments, there are chances that you will not take a distance learning programme seriously. You need to be mature and disciplined to take full advantage of a distance learning programme. Another major disadvantage of distance learning is that not all courses can be taught online. For example, subjects like Medicine and Engineering can't be taught online or through distance learning since practical classes, experiments etc. can't possibly be conducted over the internet. No matter how good the university from where you pursued your distance learning programme, some employers will always prefer a candidate who has pursued a regular programme.

Advantages of Studying through Distance Learning:

You can earn and study at the same time. Flexibility is the biggest advantage of distance learning courses. This stands true especially if you are a working professional. For those who had to take a break from studies to start working, such courses are a boon and provide the opportunity to pursue higher education. It saves time and energy. You can stay in Pune and pursue a course that is available in Bangalore. Or you might be based out of a remote village or town which does not have enough options for higher studies. Distance learning courses eliminate these obstacles. One of the biggest advantages of distance learning is that you can study at a pace that is comfortable for you. These courses are almost always cheaper as compared to their on-campus counterparts. It is convenient as you can submit your assignment with the click of a button or simply drop it off at a post-office. This is the best way to study if you are comfortable with internet and technology. You can access your study material online whenever you want and also clear doubts, exchange views and discuss with your virtual class-mates. Since you would already have all your books/online study material with you, you can pick up any topic/chapter that interests you and tackle that first! This way your interest in the subject is sustained.

In a country like India, where a basic graduation degree is mandatory to get a decent job, where the number of aspiring students outnumber the number of college seats available by a high number, distance learning programmes are the choice of many at top 20 Universities/ Colleges for Distance Learning in India. The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), the leviathan with 500+ programmes and 3 million plus students was found to be at No.1 position in a recent rating of Distance Learning Institutes.

Factors that should be taken into account while applying to Management Schools

The desire to do MBA from a brand name is the first reason why aspirants spend years attempting entrance exams to improve their percentile. Doing your management programme

from a top business school will always give that extra edge. It will remain on your CV forever and will help you get the best placements. When applying to B-Schools, aspirants should closely look at the placement programme offered by the institutes. There are many MBA institutes that claim a 100% placement guarantee. However, it is advisable for candidates not to go by the face value and get their facts correct. As compared to institutes located in small cities, MBA colleges in large cities offer better internship opportunities, better faculty and have that extra edge when it comes to final placements. The reason behind this difference is that B-Schools located in bigger cities have better industry interface. B-Schools charging up to 15 lakhs for the two-year course, taking this scenario into consideration are to see if you would be able to reap the benefits in the long run. In short, compare the amount of money you will invest to do the course and the salary you will get in future. Most important is to talk to an alumnus that will give you the type of information that is never available on the college website or brochure. Hence, you can get some real information if you speak to some former students of the institute.

JEE Advanced 2014 to be conducted by IIT Kharagpur

As per the decision by HRD Ministry, entrance examination for the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology and National Institute of Technology will be conducted by IIT, Kharagpur. The JEE Advanced 2014 examination has to be qualified by applicant wishing to take admission in the IITs and NITs., based on the scores achieved by the candidates, a cut-off list will be prepared that'd decide the candidates to be eligible for counselling and allotment process.

JEE Advanced 2014 pattern shall be same as it was in 2013, IIT entrance shall be a two stage process. Top 1.5 lakh students will be churned out for JEE advanced examination and merit list shall be prepared on JEE Advanced 2014 scores only with top 20 percentile eligibility criteria, like previous year.

CMAT 2014 Preparation Tips

One of the most important tips for preparing CMAT is to have a proper time table. Aspirants should provide equal amount of time to all concerned subjects. The routine should depict the candidate's daily routine and amount of time he is dedicating for his studies.

Collection of good study materials is another important tip for preparing CMAT. Books related to every concerned subject should be bought before starting preparation.

Question paper carries problems from almost every chapter. Collecting previous year's question papers from internet / market are very helpful for the candidates.

Initially one should always try to solve easy problems and gradually increase the level of difficulty of sums.

Time management is also another very important factor to keep in mind while preparing for CMAT 2013. Set time and try to finish off the sample papers within a time limit. This will teach time management to the students.

Many coaching centres conduct mock test which will provide the evaluation score card to every student. This will showcase the students' weak and strong areas.

Last but not the least one should always be confident enough to crack the examination.

ADMISSION ALERT

AIMS Announces ATMA December 2013 Exam Dates

Association of Indian Management Schools (AIMS), Hyderabad is conducting online AIMS Test for Management Admissions (ATMA) in the month of December, 2013. The ATMA online entrance exam will be held on December 8, 2013.

ATMA is a computer-based multiple choice question type exam which is conducted multiple times in a year for admission into MBA and PGDM courses of AIMS' participating institutes across India.

ATMA Important Dates

Date of Commencement of Registration: 20th September, 2013

Start of distribution of ATMA Bulletins: 3rd October, 2013

Close of distribution of ATMA Bulletins: 30th November, 2013 (01:00PM)

Date of closure of Registration: 2nd December, 2013 (05:00PM)

Last date for reprint of filled-in application form: 3rd December, 2013

Education News Bytes

RTE proponent educationist-activist Vinod Raina died

Educationist Vinod Raina, died of cancer at Delhi on 12th September, 2013. He was one of the key architects of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009. He was member of the expert group on 'Monitoring

of Child Rights in Education' set up by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights and a sitting member of the Central Advisory Board for Education (CABE), the highest decision-making body on education. Co-founder and executive committee member of NGO Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti, Professor Raina was a physicist by profession who resigned from Delhi University in 1985 to devote himself to grassroots work in education. He was Visiting Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies. Prof. Raina had also co-founded Eklavya, an organisation which has been advocating alternative education for more than two decades and is the only institution whose curriculum was adopted in the school educational system. He also set up the All-India People's Science Network. Prof. Raina was fellow of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Asia Leadership Fellow, Japan, and honorary Fellow of the Indian Science Writers Association. Prof. Raina worked with the Bhopal Gas Disaster victims and the anti-Narmada dam campaign.

Raina shunned publicity; the last few years were spent in the limelight as a pedagogue and a thinker who always had something new to say. When he was diagnosed with cancer four years ago, he only intensified his work as the malady spread further.

MCI seeks review of Supreme Court judgment on NEET

The Medical Council of India (MCI), on 14th September, moved the Supreme Court seeking review of its July 18 verdict quashing the NEET. The court had by two to one majority ruled that the MCI did not have the jurisdiction to enforce common entrance test (CET) on private medical colleges and that the move could also violate constitutional guarantee to minority communities to establish and manage their own educational institutions. The MCI's review petition, by senior advocate Nidesh Gupta argued that it was wrong on many counts such as it ignored the settled principles laid down by constitution benches of the apex court, wrong understanding of the MCI's powers and wrong appreciation of facts relating to medical admissions. It said the only reason behind the opposition to NEET by private medical colleges was that the single-window system blocked the thriving practice among them to admit less meritorious students through backdoor for exorbitant donation or capitation fee.

He said the minority judgment had captured the correct legal position and aptly described those NEET regulations as "boon to the student seeking to join medical profession".

CBSE terms franchisee schools as 'commercialized models'

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has termed those schools running as franchisee of principal institutes as 'commercialized models' in the recently amended by-laws which govern its affiliated schools. The move aims to keep the school education free from commercial franchisee models and to reduce the financial burden on parents arising out of heavy franchisee fees.

Naming a few franchisee schools running in the country under the brand names like Delhi Public Schools Society, Ryan International School Society, Birla Schools, Gems Group, EDIFY and Bal Vidhya Ashram Group, the board has cleared that such schools have to provide an affidavit that they have not entered into any such contract to use name and logo of the parent for consideration for their fees. The board has also recommended that such schools should delink themselves from franchisee arrangements.

The amended rule said that any franchisee school making payments to its parent institute for use. Sources said that the parent institutes initially charges Rs 10 lakh to Rs 25 lakh from franchisees to allow them use their names, logos or brand names. A senior CBSE official in Delhi requesting anonymity told TOI, "Franchise model is a sheer marketing gimmick."

Lok Sabha passed bill to set up the first-ever national aviation university

A bill to set up the first-ever national aviation university in the country named after Rajiv Gandhi to train pilots, cabin crew and aircraft engineers was passed in the Lok Sabha. The proposed university would come up at Sonia Gandhi's constituency of Rae Bareli in Uttar Pradesh. This central university will come up at the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Udaan Academy at Fursatganj in Rae Bareli.

CBSE's new evaluation format

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), in order to ensure standards, will support all its affiliated schools to generate online question papers in the major subjects for classes IX and X. In the academic session (2013-14), the conduction of summative assessment will permit all the CBSE- affiliated schools to make their own individual question paper for the examination, which was to start from September 16 onwards.



AIKS Matrimonial Service

AIKS MATRIMONIAL SERVICE

▣ Alliance is invited for Ashish Bhan born on 21 Oct. 1985 at 12:12 noon in Srinagar. Height 5' 11" Schooling from DPS R K Puram, LLM (UCL) London and Diploma in Corp-Governance, London School of Economics. He is a practicing Advocate of the Supreme Court and is Sr. Associate with TRILEGAL, an International Law firm.

He is the son of Shri Ashok Bhan, Sr. Advocate, Supreme Court of India.

Contact Details :- Mob No 91-9811866835, Email *ashokbhan@rediffmail.com*

▣ Matrimonial Alliance invited for our sweet-natured, Convent educated daughter Ht 166 inch BE (I.T) MBA (Regular) Business School University Jammu, working as Assistant Manager (H.R) in MNC at Hyderabad. Contact Er Ashok Tikoo, 49/1 Vivek Vihar (opposite Soap Factory) Paloura Jammu 181121. Email *a.tikoo@yahoo.com* 01912531762, 9419134681, 9419107183

▣ Suitable alliance invited for our son, born Srinagar 26th April 86,5.10, B.E (Electrical), MBA (Mktg), presently working in an advertising (MNC) company at Gurgaon. Parents settled in Chandigarh H. No. 5521, Sec – 38, West. Interested may please contact at mobile nos. : 09779005155, 09417005155, 0172-2625764, 0172-2771506, 0172-4625521. Or mail at *mujoo.vijay @gmail.com.*

▣ Suitable alliance invited for my son, born 24th July 1986 at Delhi, height 186 cms., MBA from Boston, U.S.A. Self employed in family business having govt. recognised export houses, corporate office at

C-153, Sector-63, Noida. Interested may kindly contact for *tekni/kulawali* through email : *arunkwattal@gmail.com* / *kuldeep_wattal@yahoo*.com or call 9811058696, 9811054228

▣ Seeking matrimonial alliance for myself (Ravi Mattoo). Born 29 Dec, 1976, 06:30:00 hrs at Srinagar (Badyar bala). Working as a Program Mgr with Network solution Pvt. Ltd (An IBM Company) at Pune. Interested may touch base via *Email: rkmworld@rediffmail.com.* Father Name: Mr. Roshan Lal Mattoo (0-9970915468)

▣ Suitable alliance is invited for our Daughter-fair, good looking, born on 24th July 1983, completed her M.B.B.S from Govt. Medical College in Maharashtra in 2009 and presently working in a private hospital in NCR. Interested may contact on below mentioned nos. :- 09419103332, 9469552005, 0191-2555977 or *ashima_tiku@yahoo.com.*

▣ Ashish, son of Shri Ashok Bhan, Sr. Advocate, born 21st Oct. 1985 at 12:12 noon in Srinagar. Schooling from DPS RK Puram, LLM (UCL) London and Dip in Corp. Governance, London School of Economics, Advocate, Supreme Court, Sr. Associate with Trilegal, an international law firm.

▣ Suitable alliance invited for my daughter, born on 28th September, 1985 at 1:26 a.m. New Delhi. 5' 4.5" tall, MSc (Biotech) from Delhi; M.Res. from U.K. and is likely to submit Thesis (PhD) (Genes, DNA. RNA) in October 2013 to U.K. University. She is also proficient in computer programming. She is in U.K. from the last four years and getting scholarship from U.K. Govt. Interested may contact E-mail: *dharpran9@gmail.com; d.rita55@gmail.com.* Tel 22720017; 22728810; 43107836; 9811107227; 9871144736.

▣ Alliance is invited for a handsome and blessed with high human values, only son, born on 3rd September 1985 at 2.25 p.m at Srinagar Kashmir. Height 170 cms, B.E Mechanical, working as Assistant Manager in Shree Ram Pistons and Rings Ltd. Gaziabad. Own flat at Faridabad. Interested may contact for tekni/ kulawali at email:- *tikoo.bk01@gmail.com*, or mobile no. 09999131654, 09811350503, also at Jammu 0191-2504559.

▣ Suitable alliance invited for our son, Vipin Bhat, born on 27.10.1986, height 5.6 ft. having passed B. Tech in Electronics and telecommunication and presently working as Networking Engineer in an MNC i.e Sungard and

is posted at Aundh Pune. Family actually from Village Nagam of Tehsil Chadoora, District Badgam and presently residing at House no. 1, Basant Nagar Ext. Janipur, Jammu. For other details, *Tekni* and *kulawali*, Pl. contact B.K.Bhat at 09419210744 or 9469259444.

■ I am searching a well cultured KP boy for my daughter (DOB 15th Sept,1985), height 5'. 5", done MBA in HR from Punjab Technical University, PGDBM from Jammu University, BSc from Jammu University. One Year Diploma in Computer Application. Working in a Private School in Jammu. Originally resident of Kupwara Kashmir. Interested may please contact A K Raina with *Tekni* and Bio- data at following ; Contact on:- *autarkraina@gmail.com*, or :- +91-9796495830 (Jammu), +91-9419377514 (Jammu), +91-9899319303(Gurgaon).

■ Alliance sought for my son Rakesh, DOB 25th Sept. 1979, Height 6ft, qualification BE (Mech) DCA. Doing his own business and citizen of USA., If interested contact Ashok Koul on 8295975854/9896352270 or email *ashokkoul57@gmail.com*

■ Alliance invited for our meritorious, handsome, 5' 11' tall doctor son, born Srinagar January 24, 1987 (5:48 p.m.), studied at prestigious educational institutions. Presently doing residency in Medicine in USA. Belongs to a reputed and well settled family of doctors based in New Delhi. We are seeking a matching cultured beautiful medico bride from a respectable family. Those interested may kindly mail the *kulawali* and *Tekni* of the girl at *dranilmotta@gmail.com* and may contact Dr. Renu at 9582500371.

■ Alliance invited for KP boy born March 15, 1982,, at Kashmir, presently working with MNC Company at Noida. For further correspondance, Plz contact 09018119138.

■ A Delhi – settled family seeking suitable match for their only son, non/mangalik, born 27 April 1985 10/55 AM at Delhi. Pharma Graduate and PDG in Clinical Research, presently working as business analyst with a MNC at Gurgaon. Contact *skraina54@gmail.com*. 9716957563 (M) & 011-25612095.

■ Suitable alliance invited for my grandson, born and brought up in Delhi, D.O.B. – 13/03/1985, time 16:15 hrs., height 180cm, degree in hospitality management from Kolkata and Diploma in international hospitality management from Queen Margrat University, Scotland. Working as Mid Management Manager in international hotel chain in Delhi. Girl should be professionally qualified and based in Delhi. Contact No. -01127012607, 9873684677 Email id – *vijay.vali1956@gmail.com*

■ Old Kashmiri Pandit family Girl 28/5'4" B.com. Working at an IT Co. seeks qualified match, Contact – *kashmirigirl4@gmail.com* / Ph. No. 9758492677.

■ Alliance invited for a pretty K.P. girl, born Sept. 11, 1988 A.M. at Bikaner, Rajasthan, height 5' – 3". B.E. Electronics & Telecommunication, presently working as Senior Software Engineer in an MNC at Chandigarh. Interested parties may contact *ramesh.k.kaul@gmail.com* / Tel. (Res.) 01274-258014/09254252925 (Mob), with *tekni* and other particulars.

■ Suitable alliance invited for my daughter and son. The particulars are as under:- Daughter:- D.O.B-August 1985, having completed Diploma in Computer Engineering through J&K Technical Board, Height: 5ft approximate, Working in a Private School as Teacher. Son:- D.O.B-June 1984, having completed Degree in Hotel Management from Manglore University, Karnataka, Height—5.6ft approximately. Worked at Carnival Cruise Miami USA for 3 yrs approximately. Currently working at IBIS (Accor Group of Hotels) Himmat Pur, near IGI Airport, New Delhi. For other detais pl. contact Piyare Lal Saproo on 9419234117, 01912591563 or *plsaproo4749@yahoo.com*

■ Mohan Kishen Razdan of Chandapura, Habbakadal, Srinagar, at present at Jammu, wants suitable match for his daughter born at Srinagar (Kashmir) on 16th February, 1983, at 10.45 A.M., height 5' and 7". She holds B.E. from M.I.T. Pune and M.S. from Sanhose University, California, U.S.A. presently working in Silicon city of U.S.A as Process Engineer in Semi-Conductor Inc. For detailed information, contact Mohan Kishen Razdan on cell phone +919419138620 or mail at *razdanmohan@yahoo.com*

■ Looking for suitable alliance for my son, born at Chandigarh-25th Sept. 1979, has done BE (Mech.) and DCA, Having own transport business. Settled as a US citizen. Those interested may contact 8950124292/ 9896352270 or Email *ashokkoul57@gmail.com*.

■ Suitable alliance invited for my son, Vishant, born on 19th Dec.1985 at Srinagar, 5' 8" normally built, has obtained degree in Hotel Management & Hospitality and M.B.A. Presently working in Hotel J.W.Marriot Chandigarh as Executive in Room Operations Deptt. For *tekni*, please contact

Vijay Saraf on 9780026162 or 0172-2673731 or send mail to *visaraf2002@gmail.com* 3074, SBI Officer's Society, Sector 49 D, Chandigarh

■ Suitable alliance invited for my niece, born in Srinagar, 10th May, 1987, has done BSc in Computer Science & MBA (HR), presently working in a company at Gurgaon. Interested may please contact on 09797630112 / 8800795381or email

anjali_kachroo@yahoo.co.in.

■ Seeking matrimonial alliance for myself (Ravi Mattoo). Born 29 Dec, 1976, 06:30:00 hrs at Srinagar (Badiyar Bala). Working as a Program Mgr with Network Solution Pvt. ltd (An IBM company) at Pune. Interested may touch base with: Roshan Lal Mattoo, Email: *rkmworld@rediffmail.com.*

■ Suitable alliance invited for my daughter, born 11th December, 1988 Height 166 cms. Having completed B. Tech in EC from Galgotia College of Engineering & Technology (Noida). Presently working as Telecom Engineer in Ericssion (Global) India Ltd. based at Noida. For *tekni* and other details, contact on:- 09760094489, 09837339234 & 09927233549. or *Bhattmanni51@yahoo.com.*

■ Non - Manglik matrimonial alliance invited for my daughter, born 24 July 1985, 22:49 Hrs, at Srinagar Kashmir. Has completed B Tech (CSE) from Nagpur Univ. Please contact 9005092102. B.K. Moza.

■ Alliance sought for a 1985-born good looking KP girl, first class MBA in Mktg. from a top institute and working in a responsible position with a reputed MNC. Intelligent, self-made, well read and accomplished, possesses excellent values; is homely well conversant with KP culture, language and cuisine. The girl is legally divorced from a short [non KP] marriage with no issue. The girl belongs to a respectable and educated family. Her parents are looking for a qualified, matured groom from a noble KP family who will take home a gem of a home maker. Location is no bar nor is the family's wealth. We believe education and family values are the greatest wealth. Please contact +9198 72992186 or write at *sadhubansilal@gmail.com.*

■ Alliance invited for our daughter, May 1981 born / Ht- 159 cms. She has Masters Degree in Speech and Hearing. Professionally she is a speech language pathologist, working with children and adults with special needs in San Jose (California) for the last 5 years on H1B Visa. We are looking for a suitable young man based in USA who can be an equal partner in her life. Interested parents may contact with Bio-data and photograph of the boy at *chinarmunshi@gmail.com.*

■ Suitable alliance invited for a 31 year old (1982 born), legally divorced Kashmiri Pandit lady, having a four-year old girl child. The lady is good looking, cultured and from a very well respected and reputed family of Baramulla, Kashmir. She has completed her Diploma in Architecture Engineering and has been working in different organizations. For *tekni* and other details, please contact on: - 9811561341 or *puranpatwari@yahoo.co.in.*

■ Alliance invited for KP boy, born 15/03/1982 in Kashmir. Presently working with MNC Company at Noida. For further correspondence, Plz contact on 09018119138.

■ Seeking matching alliance for daughter, born at Srinagar, April 1987, BE Computer Science and appearing for MBA through correspondence and working in Gurgaon. Girl is 5' 3.5" tall and fair. Parents settled in Faridabad. Interested community members may send *tekni* and *Kulawali* to *renupajan @gmail.com* or *raj_692@hotmail.com* or call 9312069965 or 9910166993 for any clarifications or details.

■ Alliance invited for my son, born 30/05/1986 at Srinagar, 8.53 PM, educated and brought up in Punjab, slightly manglik, Ht. 181 cm, smart and handsome, modern but connected to roots; B Tech [ECE] and Diploma in Telecom Software, works as Senior Engineer at Larsen & Toubro Infotech Ltd, Hyderabad. Earlier worked with Ericsson India Ltd and Wipro Infotech. Family permanently settled at Delhi. Interested may contact with all details at Mobile: 0-9417075730, Email id : *satishganjoo@hotmail.com* or *drsatishganjoo@yahoo.com.*

■ Suitable alliance invited for my son, born 4th Dec 1980, 178cms, B.E (Electronics Design Tech) from India and currently working at Singapore in an MNC. Kindly correspond at *kaul.ashok50@gmail.com* or +91-9419-663579

■ Suitable alliance invited for a 1985 born *(Manglik)* KP Girl. Presently working in a reputed MNC at Pune. Interested may send *Tekni* / Bio-Data or write to *sharikajee@gmail.com* for more details.

[Courtesy Puran Patwari
Secretary AIKS]



OBITUARIES

Dr. Suresh Kumar Tikoo



Dr. Suresh Kumar Tikoo (Billooj), son of Shri P. N. Tikoo and Smt. Mohini Tikoo, and husband of Dr. Suman Jogi Tikoo, breathed his last on September 20, 2013 at Delhi.

Our deep condolences to the bereaved family members. May the soul of the departed rest in peace !

Smt. Raj Dulari Handoo



Smt. Raj Dulari Handoo (nee Zutshi), wife of Shri Madan Krishan Handoo (originally from Rainawari, Srinagar), presently at Mayur Vihar, Phase - III, left for her heavenly abode on September 22, 2013 at New Jersey, USA. She was the mother of late Shri Ashutosh Handoo, Mrs Manju Mehta (USA), Shri Vibhuti Handoo, mother-in-law of Alka Lahori Handoo and Renu Handoo and grand- mother of Ms Sheen Handoo.

Our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family. May the soul of the departed rest in peace !

Jagdish Lal Raina



Professor Jagdish Lal Raina, son of Shri Mohan Lal Raina (originally resident of 18, Azad Basti, Natipora, Srinagar), presently at plot No. 28, Flat No. M – 104, Ajnara Residency, Shalimar Garden Extn – 1, Sahibabad, left for his heavenly abode on September 25, 2013.

Prof Jagdish Lal was a well known respected Teacher in Vishwa Bharati College Rainawari and he continued to teach Physics even during the peak of terrorism in Kashmir in 1990s. He left Kashmir only after retirement in early 2000.

May his noble soul rest in eternal peace !

– Dr. Romesh Raina
(His Student)

Arjan Dev Dudha



Shri Arjan Dev Dudha (originally from Rajbagh, Jawahar Nagar, Srinagar), presently at 313/10, Kabir Nagar, Talab Tillo, Jammu, breathed his last at Jammu on September 23, 2013. He was the eldest brother of Shri Shiban Dudha, Former Gen. Secretary AIKS.

Our heartfelt condolences to Shiban Ji and all members of the Dudha Parivar in their bereavement. May the soul of the departed rest in peace !

Ashok Kumar Parimoo



Shri Ashok Kumar Parimoo, son of Late Pandit Damodar Parimoo (originally resident of Narsinggarh Srinagar) and presently at 1003, Aditya Mega City, (Ghaziabad) left for his heavenly abode on September 24, 2013. He was a popular activist and would often be seen at the community get – togethers and Hawans. He was a writer and authored a book on Kashmiri Pandits.

Our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

Smt. Shyamrani Kaw



Smt. Shyamrani Kaw, beloved mother of Shri Opender Kaw of Flat no. 11-B/ (G.F)/Indarprastha Colony, Faridabad, passed away on September 28, 2013; she was originally from Rainawari, Srinagar.

May Almighty bestow peace on the departed soul and give the family members strength and courage to bear this irretrievable loss.

Opender Kaw
9871887898 (M), 9910771148 (M)

OBITUARY



PANDIT PRAN NATH PAJAN

With profound grief we inform that Pt. Pran Nath Pajan S/o Late Pt. Balbhadar Pajan, originally resident of Badiyar Bala, Srinagar, left for his heavenly abode on Friday 27th September 2013 at Jammu. Fondly called "Papa" by family members and "Pran Ji" by friends, he was known for his simplicity and grace. His exit from this world was peaceful.

In grief:

Daughter & Son-in-law

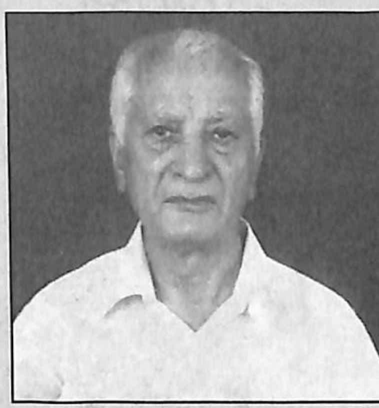
Lalita & Ashok Koul, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi.

Sons & daughters-in-law

Maharaj Pajan & Krishna, Faridabad 9910166993
Tej K Pajan & Usha, Jammu 9419156822
Vinod Pajan & Renu, Faridabad 9312069965

AIKS joins the Pajan Parivar in their grief. May Mata Sharika rest the soul of the deceased in peace !

OBITUARY



Shri Jagdish Chander Kaul
(June 1925- August 2013)

Fondly called Papaji, he embraced eternity on 30th August 2013. With tears flowing down our cheeks and with hearts benumbed in pain, we mourn his sudden loss. We pray for his everlasting peace in Heaven. May the merciful God give us enough strength and resolve to bear the sorrow of his passing away. He was the bastion of our family strength and a fighting soldier to the end.

Grief – Stricken
Prabha Kaul (Boba) – Wife
Shiban K Kaul & Lalita – Son & Daughter-in-law
Chandra & Shiban K Dhar – Daughter & Son-in-law
Kamal Kaul & Veena – Son & Daughter-in-law
Jaya Kaul W/o Late Mohan Lal Kaul – Sister-in-law
Kanahya Lal Kaul & Ushaji – Brother & Sister-in-law
Chanderkanta & P N Shakdher – Sister-in-law & Brother-in-Law

Loving 'Bade' Papaji of –

Robinder Rita Kaul, Nimmi Kaul, Romesh Mona Kaul, Nalini Ramesh Razdan, Sujata Kishore Kotha, Vijay Kaul, Vinod Pooja Kaul, Karishma Kaul, Kapil Vinanti Kaul, Komal Vineet Deoda, Supriya Vijay Pandita, Sneha Dhar, Prashant Kotha, Abhinav Kaul, Moksha Kaul & Little Myra & Aditi and Samast Kaul Parivar, Kakroos, Tikoos, Dhars, Rainas, Shakdhers

And
All relatives and friends

Originally from Karafali Mohalla, Habbakadal, Srinagar, Kashmir.
House No – 523, Saraswati Vihar, Chakkarpur, M.G. Road, Gurgaon, Haryana.
L. L. : 0124-4034750, Mobile No : 09619460102.

SHRADDHANJALI
ON
SECOND DEATH ANNIVERSARY
(August 24, 2013)



Smt. Girja Raina (Kak)

W/o A. K. Raina
Rtd. Director School Education
Vice President AIKS

Two years have passed since you left for heavenly abode.

"Life has not been the same after you left us. Time comes and goes but cannot fill a void created by cruel hands of destiny".

We all continue to miss you and your ever smiling face around every moment, you remain with us in our heart every where and every moment.

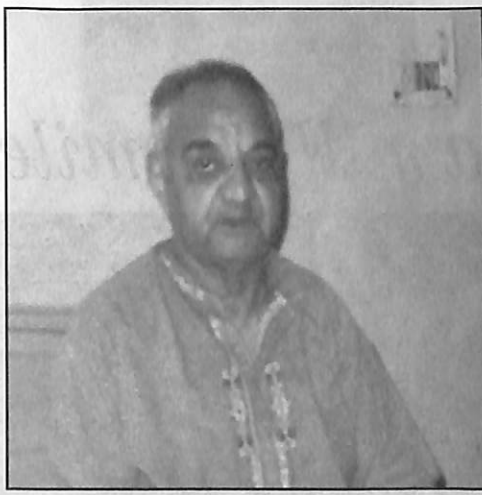
The fragrance of your nobility, simplicity, devotion and sincerity and, above all, the love and guidance showered by you on your family, your relations and friends, are treasures that we all deeply cherish.

Your vision, your dreams, your values and the ideas you shared with us continue to guide and inspire us. We are consistently striving to follow these ideas and values.

We pray to Almighty to rest your noble soul in peace.

Deeply remembered and missed by :- Rainas, Saproos, Kaks and Sarafs

OBITUARY



Late Makhan Lal Pandita (Patwari)

[30.01.1939—08.09.2013]

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform about the sad, sudden and untimely demise of our revered father, Pandit Makhan Lal Pandita (Patwari), originally from Mohalla Jadeed, Baramulla (Kashmir) on 8th September 2013 at his Dehradun residence, B-307, Hill View Apartments, Sahasradhara Road, Dehradun.

We pray to God Almighty to bestow peace to the soul of Pandit Makhan Lal Pandita (Patwari) and give the family members the courage to bear this irretrievable loss.

Grief Stricken

Dinesh Pandita (Rohini Delhi)
Mob. No. 09810036667, pandita@innovalabinstruments.com

Manoj Pandita (Dehradun)
Mob. No. 099368923344, panditamanoj@yahoo.com

OBITUARY



Late Smt. Shanta Kaul

With profound grief and deep sorrow we regret to inform that our beloved mother, grandmother and great grandmother, Smt Shanta Kaul, wife of late Shri B. N. Kaul left for her heavenly abode on 26th September 2013. Our prayers for peace and eternal happiness to be bestowed on her soul.

Dearest Mummy, you might have left this world physically but your indomitable spirit is always alive in each of our hearts. In our times of sorrow and joy, your blessings will guide and help us to overcome any obstacle. The evergreen fragrance of your unconditional love and affection assures us that we will always walk on the right path of life and be able to face our lives on our own.

Children-

Naresh & Rashmi Sapru (Son & Daughter-in-law)
Sheila & Hiralal Wangnoo (Daughter & Son-in-law)
Veena & Ashwini Raina (Daughter & Son-in-law).

Grand Children-

Upasana & Suraj, Pooja & Swapnadip
Akshay & Jui, Arjun , Nishant & Nakul

Great Grand Children-

Lyla, Aaran & Irsia.

We would like to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to all the relatives and friends especially Paschim Vihar Kashmiri Pandit Welfare Association for their concern and support in this hour of grief.

AIKS sincerely shares the grief of the bereaved family.

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